Sexual Harassment, Justice Perceptions, and Social Identity: Cognition and Group Dynamics

Devon Marrott
devonm@coyote.csusb.edu

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT, JUSTICE PERCEPTIONS, AND GROUP IDENTITY:

COGNITION AND GROUP DYNAMICS

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A Thesis

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Psychology:

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by

Devon Courtney Marrott

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to observe the dynamics between sexual harassment (SH), social identity theory, and justice perceptions. Furthermore, participants’ past experience with SH may have created conspiracy mentalities to explain outgroup members (e.g., males) behavior towards women. From a social identity perspective, women who strongly identify with being female should be more prone to view lower justice perceptions when a male investigator denies an SH claim, but equally high levels of justice perceptions when male or female investigators confirm SH and when a female investigator denies SH. Four scenarios were created where female participants (N = 283) were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: Scenario 1 involved a female investigator who confirmed an SH claim; Scenario 2 involved a female investigator who denied an SH claim; Scenario 3 involved a male investigator who confirmed an SH claim; and Scenario 4 involved a male investigator who denied an SH claim. Regression analyses revealed that social identity (i.e., gender identity) had no predictive value on justice perceptions, but that the decision of the investigators did. Furthermore, an ANOVA was utilized and discovered significant mean differences between the four scenarios, suggesting that there were differences when the investigator confirmed SH (both male and female) or denied SH (both male and female), but there was no significant interaction. Participants had low justice perceptions when SH was denied and higher justice perceptions when SH was confirmed. Practical and theoretical implications are discussed, as well as directions for future research.
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CHAPTER ONE  
LITERATURE REVIEW

Sexual Harassment, Justice Perceptions, and Group Identity: Cognition and Group Dynamics

Sexual harassment is a social issue that effects the lives of millions of individuals (predominantly women) around the world (McDonald, 2012; Page, Pina, & Giner-Sorolla, 2016). Understanding what sexual harassment is has both practical and theoretical advantages. Strictly from a practical view, the way sexual harassment is defined will influence how individuals and organizations approach it (Cortina & Berdahl, 2008). For example, some definitions may be too narrow in scope, leading organizations to overlook or dismiss specific grievances that others do not perceive as harassing. Other definitions may be too broad, thereby producing no specific solution or remedy to cases of harassment when they are presented. Understanding what sexual harassment is, contextual factors contributing to its occurrence (individual and environmental), and the ramifications of it (individual and organizational) will be examined from the literature. As will be revealed, most of these prior factors have been thoroughly studied. However, as far as I am aware, the process of sexual harassment has yet to be studied from the theoretical perspective of ingroup/outgroup dynamics; specifically, through social identity theory. The overarching question of this study was to understand if perceptions of sexual harassment are influenced by an individual's identification with his or her ingroup or outgroup.
The purpose of this study was to highlight the areas of sexual harassment that have already been examined, after which a theoretical framework was put forth to study sexual harassment using ingroup and outgroup dynamics. I begin with an overview of the definitions of sexual harassment, contextual factors that contribute to sexual harassment, individual/dispositional factors contributing to it, and individual and organizational consequences of sexual harassment. Afterwards, I will provide the theoretical foundation for this study by looking at ingroup and outgroup dynamics. However, first I will define what constitutes sexual harassment.

Defining Sexual Harassment

Some researchers have stipulated that SH is a “workplace event that, by definition, is appraised by the recipient as stressful” (Schneider, Swan, & Fitzgerald, 1997, p. 403). This is considered the hallmark of sexual harassment. There is a perceptual process that determines if SH has occurred or not. SH also constitutes “coercion of sexual cooperation by threat of job-related consequences (quid pro quo harassment) and unwanted and offensive sex-related verbal or physical conduct, even absent of any job-related threat (hostile work environment)” (Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997, p. 401; see also Bargh, Raymond, Pryor, & Strack, 1995). Other authors have described it as “any sexually oriented speech or behavior that makes it more difficult for one gender than the other to perform in the work environment” or a “form of gender-based discrimination” (Bargh et al., 1995, p. 768). Because victims of sexual harassment are primarily women, it has been deemed a form of sex
discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (McDonald, 2012; Rudman, Borgida, & Robertson, 1995). SH is not just an organizational problem, but a societal one.

The Sexual Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) breaks SH into three major dimensions including sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1995). Furthermore, Schneider et al. (1997) identifies other behavioral patterns that constitute SH, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, and quid pro quo suggestions, often making continued employment or promotions contingent on the sexual favor being fulfilled.

Despite these advantages of defining SH, it also has several drawbacks. As Quick and McFadyen (2017) have noted, some of these definitions are too narrow. Because legal definitions of SH change over time, psychologists are unable to directly compare studies across time. Furthermore, there are occurrences of sexual harassment that are not covered by the law (Cortina & Berdahl, 2008). There has been argumentation suggesting that SH is not merely sexual. In other words, people who engage in sexual harassment are not doing it for sexual desire, but from a more sex-based motivation to establish power and dominance (Wade & Powell, 2001). Understanding the contextual factors contributing to SH become ever more important if we are going to identify elements that can reduce its occurrence.

In summary, SH has both theoretical and legal definitions. It comes in the form of threats, behaviors, actions, words, and gender-based attitudes. Typically,
the motivation is to fulfill sexual desire or to establish power or dominance over another person. Oftentimes, survivors of SH have to withstand consequences that may or may not be job-related. It is a subjective process, on behalf of the survivors, where interpretation of an interaction is deemed stressful. It becomes increasingly important for us to understand the elements that contribute or determine how one appraises sexual harassment from the viewpoint of the organization and from the viewpoint of the victim.

**Contextual Factors of Sexual Harassment**

One of the first determinants of contextual contributions increasing the likelihood of sexual harassment was based on perceptions of gender (Gutek, 1985). More specifically, if men outnumbered women or if men were the supervisors, sexual harassment was more likely to occur (see also Bargh et al., 1995), or the reporting of it would be significantly diminished. Fitzgerald et al. (1997) suggested that this job-gender context is magnified by the roles that society places on gender. For example, Rudman, Borgida, and Robertson (1995) reported that women are viewed as individuals who desire to avoid conflict, are more interested in harmony, and prefer caring or nurture over justice perceptions. These types of stereotypes will create a culture that will prevent women from the mere attempt to defend themselves in the workplace when they are mistreated. When sexual harassment cases go unpunished by organizations, there are two issues that are likely to follow: first, the victim will not take initiative to report it; second, the perpetrator will not stop doing it (see also Gutek & Koss, 1993). A male-dominated work environment that exists within a climate that does not
punish male-dominance and embraces female-submission is going to be a potent recipe for unethical social exchanges in the workplace. This has been a pattern that continues to be observed (Block, 2014; Monk-Turner et al., 2008; Quick & MacFayden, 2017).

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), while SH complaints overall have declined by 28.5% from 1997-2011, SH complaints by men have increased 15.3% (Quick & MacFayden, 2017). Having said that, women are still reporting the majority of these complaints. It is not clear whether men are being harassed more, or if men are just more willing to voice their grievances, thereby overcoming some of the stereotypical views among men. Examples of this phenomenon are already being made manifest in areas of mental health counseling (Vogel & Heath, 2016). Men who abandon the stigma of masculinity and adopt self-compassion are more likely to seek counseling than those who adhere to the masculinity stigma (Heath, Brenner, Vogel, Lannin, & Strass, 2017). If men who are willing to abandon this stigmatized version of masculinity, embrace self-compassion, and seek psychological help, perhaps men will be more likely to report sexual harassment grievances when they are survivors of it because they possess greater levels of self-compassion.

A second factor beyond the job-gender context is organizational culture. Fitzgerald, Gelfand, and Drasgow (1995) and Schneider et al. (1997) have explored the organizational contexts that facilitate SH’s manifestations. An organization’s policies, norms, and/or tolerance of sexual harassment will precipitate its occurrence (Block, 2014; Demir & Rodwell, 2012). Organizations
may communicate a culture of tolerating SH by not punishing those who engage in it or they might stipulate that the recipients of it are being too easily offended. This solidifies the issue of stereotypical views among genders, as men are viewed more aggressively and domineering, while women are perceived as wanting to be more harmonious and avoiding conflict, thereby making them more communal and social (Eagley et al., 2003). As a psychological construct, we understand SH more thoroughly by considering these social dynamics. These elements, taken together, create a force that will reduce the likelihood that women will feel they can report the abuse that they are being subjected to (Bargh et al., 1995; Block, 2014).

Unfortunately, there are several barriers that inhibit the likelihood that a female survivor will report their abuse. The fundamental desire to avoid conflict, the fear of retaliation of reporting the conflict, and emphasizing care over justice are potent factors (Rudman et al., 1995). Additionally, it is also worth noting that some women might not even trust the system. In other words, whatever policy for SH that the organization has in place, the women might believe it is inherently supportive of the perpetrator. Rudman et al. (1995) also point out that age, level of severity, and authoritative positions will influence if women report SH. Younger women view it as more normative than older women and, consequently, will be less likely to report it; severe cases of harassment will more likely be reported than less severe cases; and positions of authority, women who have higher or more authoritative positions, will be more likely to report it than women in lower level positions.
Bergman, Langhout, Palmieri, Cortina, and Fitzgerald (2002) asserted that, due to the consequences (discussed later) of sexual harassment, it might not even be reasonable for women to report SH, as they are not the recipients of any alleged benefits of reporting it. Other barriers, according to Bergman et al. (2002), include attitudes (people with negative views towards SH should be more likely to report it), the frequency of behavior (the less a behavior occurs, the more innocuous it will be perceived, and the less likely it will be reported), and the organizational climate (the organization does not take grievances seriously or does not take appropriate action against the perpetrator, thereby leading to lower likelihood of the offense being reported). The authors conclude that the “…reasonable course of action for the victim is to avoid reporting” (p. 237). This cannot be the mentality that we adopt, for it will merely contribute to the cycle of SH; women are already not reporting because they do not think anything will happen. They need to feel that their complaints will be heard and that necessary consequences will follow.

In summary, contextual factors contributing to sexual harassment include the organizational climate, job-gender context, gender stereotypes, a lack of trust in organizational policies, age, the severity of the abuse, power, and other attitudinal factors surrounding SH. As suggested by Bergman et al. (2002), the organizational climate may very well be the biggest contributor to this phenomenon.

Individual or Dispositional Factors of Sexual Harassment
In addition to the contextual factors that contribute to sexual harassment, there are individual propensities that will increase the likelihood of its occurrence (Bargh et al., 1995). Scholars using feminist theories argue that sexual harassment occurs because men are trying to maintain their status of power and dominance over women (Brownmiller, 1975; Wage & Powell, 2001). As Bergman et al. (2002) have also pointed out, “…power is central to sexual harassment” (p. 232). As women have progressively increased their presence in the workforce, there is a threat of a man’s masculinity that motivates him to discriminate against those who challenge him. Bargh et al. (1995) suggest that power is when one person has control over the rewards and costs of someone else, the former being in a situation where they do not have any kind of reciprocal control. Consequently, the individual with power will be able to have more control over the victim, thereby giving him more control over his subordinate. McDonald (2012) provides examples of how power relations are at the core of SH: “…gender bullying, mobbing, racial harassment and sex-based harassment, such as verbal put-downs, abusive remarks, and marginalizing or exclusionary behaviors on the basis of gender” (p. 2).

This notion of power has also been examined by Gutek and Koss (1993). That is, a man in a position of power is more likely to be the perpetrator. This position of power has another detrimental effect; a woman is less likely to report the abuse if the abuser is in a higher position of power. Furthermore, a woman who is not in a position of power, but in a lower position in the hierarchical structure, is less likely to report the abuse. Power, then, is on a continuum. If a
man is above women, he is more likely to be the one who harasses and she is more likely to not report the harassment when it occurs. This relationship is not causal, as most male managers do not harass (Bargh et al., 1995; see also Fitzgerald, 1993). Determining, then, who is more likely to harass is an important area of research.

To assess the likelihood that someone will engage in sexually harassing behavior, Pryor (1987) has implemented the use of a scale called the Likelihood to Sexually Harass Scale (LHS). A considerable issue pertaining assessing individual propensities, with self-reports, is that people are not going to necessarily be inclined to admit that they have sexually harassed someone (Pryor, 1987, p. 270). A popular finding from this study reveals that individuals who emphasize male dominance in social and sexual settings will be more likely to sexually harass. Even the acceptance of rape myths (women unconsciously want to be raped, enjoy male dominance, etc.), one of the strongest correlations discovered, significantly contributes to one’s likelihood to engage in sexually harassing behavior. The research appears to confirm that more work could be done on assessing the dispositions of the harassers (McDonald, 2012).

Another potent factor contributing to SH behaviors is the adherence to traditional male masculinity (Wade & Powell, 2001). These researchers have shown that male masculinity is centered on power, often at the expense of others. Specifically, traditional masculinity embraces views of “anti-femininity, homophobia, emotional restrictiveness, competitiveness, toughness, and aggressiveness, to name a few” (p.43). Using such measures as the Reference
Group Identity Dependence Scale (RGIDS), Male Role Norms Inventory (MRNI), Personal Attributes Questionnaire (PAQ), Quick Discrimination Index (QDI), and the Sexual Harassment Proclivities Scale (SHP), they have correlated this traditional masculinity view with “adversarial sexual beliefs, likelihood to rape, and likelihood of sexually exploiting subordinates on the job” (Wage & Powell, 2001, p. 44). Additionally, traditional masculinity has a correlation with negative views about women and minorities.

Fitzgerald (1993) argues that many men, regardless of their individual propensities, will engage in sexually harassing behavior without knowing it. In other words, “men just don’t get it” (Bargh et al., 1995, p. 770). Per Pryor (1987), men will oftentimes seek to provide excuses for their behavior if the situation and circumstance permit it. Efforts to increase awareness of sexual harassment are going to be essential if this barrier is to be overcome. The inability to see other people’s points of view, engage in self-awareness, and participate in self-regulation will increase the likelihood of this abuse occurring.

There are certain variables that appear to be targets of SH, including “…divorced or separated women; young women, women in non-traditional jobs, women with disabilities, lesbian women and women from ethnic minorities; gay men; and young men” (McDonald, 2012, p. 7). More troubling for these groups is that if an individual identifies with more than one, there is an even higher likelihood that they will become targets.

In summary, there are sociological and psychological components that contribute to the likelihood of individuals engaging in sexual harassment.
Namely, the search and security of power becomes a motivating factor to exploit people who threaten that establishment. Second, traditional views of masculinity are a significant predictor of who would be more likely to harass people in the workforce.

**Individual Consequences to Sexual Harassment**

I have briefly examined sexual harassment as a construct and highlighted settings where sexual harassment is likely to occur. In my efforts to understand SH, it cannot be adequately understood without considering the contextual factors that are contributing to why millions of individuals experience it. I believe these contextual factors are important considerations as we examine the consequences that sexual harassment has on behavior so that specific organizations can be better equipped to deal with this construct. When examining the research, there are individual (psychological) consequences and organizational consequences.

Gutek and Koss (1993) articulated three factors that might influence how a victim, most likely female, will respond to SH; first, she might not be aware she is experiencing it; second, she may not know what to do about it; and third, she may not have the support from others to stop it. This observation alone should merit immediate attention from individuals and organizations alike. Lacking awareness of SH puts victims in extremely vulnerable positions where they will be susceptible (and submissive) of behaviors that they do not even know ought to be considered inappropriate. Being in a discomforting situation and not knowing how to resolve it can be an overwhelming experience, reducing self-
efficacy. And not having the support of the resources around you will also impair means self-efficacy (Agars & Kottke, 2010).

Consequences, whether real or anticipated, influence steps that individuals will take when they are confronted with SH (Gutek & Koss, 1993). In other words, women are worried about receiving poor performance appraisals, being labeled (too sensitive, mildly depressed after harassment, etc.), perceiving a lack of procedural justice, economic costs due to the filed grievance, and not knowing how others will react. Consequently, there is not one single factor or consequence to SH, but there are many possible ones. Again, women will feel that they are stuck, thereby weakening and reducing their self-efficacy.

Szymanksi and Feltman (2015) suggest that “objectification theory aims to provide a framework for what it is like to live in a culture that sexually objectifies women’s bodies” (p. 390). One disturbing consequence of being sexually objectified is the tendency for women to internalize it when it happens. In other words, they will begin to accept it (both their personal encounters and the societal standards), uphold sanctioned standards of beauty, and will begin modifying their everyday appearance to be consistent with how they look at work. Therefore, the consequences don’t just stay in work; they adjust their personal lives to fit the standards of what happens at work. Additionally, they will be more likely to monitor their weight and engage in strategies to appear more physically appealing (padded bras, stomach girdles, and/or plastic surgery). Another component of this internalization is related to body shame (Szymankski & Feltman, 2015). In other words, women, upon being objectified, will evaluate their
own bodies and compare that to society’s standards. If they perceive that they do not meet the standard, they will feel shame. Therefore, sexual objectification is strongly related to increased experiences of body shame.

Initially, Syzmanski and Feltman (2015) discussed body-related consequences for objectification. However, they also reported that there are lower mental health outcomes that are far more common for women than for men. For example, sadness and depression, PTSD, eating disorders, and sexual dysfunctions are highly correlated. Additionally, there is an increased risk for substance abuse, decreased relationship satisfaction, problems with breastfeeding attitudes, and increased self-harm (Syzmanski & Feltman, 2015).

Other researchers have examined consequences related to the individual or psychological consequences of SH (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). For example, positive correlation was found between sexual harassment and psychological distress, and an indirect relationship between sexual harassment and physical health. In other words, sexual harassment specifically has a direct impact on psychological distress, and psychological distress acts as a mediator thereby having an indirect impact on physical health. In addition to those features, trauma has also been reported to be a psychological experience for women who are recipients of sexual harassment (Schneider et al., 1997).

In summary, for the individual or psychological consequences of sexual harassment, mental illness (depression, anxiety, PTSD, and other stress-related complaints) is a likely outcome. Additionally, per objectification theory, women are more likely to internalize the abuse, experience higher levels of body shame,
engage in self-harm including substance abuse, and be less satisfied with themselves, their bodies, and their sexual activity. Indirectly, sexual harassment has ramifications for physical health.

Organizational Consequences to Sexual Harassment

Individuals who are suffering the ramifications of being sexually harassed are going to be the same people who have to go to work after sustaining their abuse. Consequently, their subjective experiences are going to spill over into the workplace. The effects and consequences are not only vast for individuals, but for organizations, as well. You cannot hone SH down to one-single impact because there are so many (Gutek & Koss, 1993, p. 30).

Popular ramifications that have been highlighted by several researchers include decreased job satisfaction, performance, organizational commitment, and morale, in addition to increased turnover, absenteeism, withdrawal, job stress, and burnout (Gutek & Koss, 1993; Page et al., 2016; Quick & McFadyen, 2017). Additionally, Gutek and Koss (1993) point out other organizational consequences such as a loss of trust and satisfaction with interpersonal relationships and an increase in negative affect. These perceptions, feelings, and attitudes that these survivors have are going to blowback onto other coworkers, customers, and organizational climate. Not only should we be concerned with how SH impacts people at the individual level, but how SH indirectly affects others in the organization, as well as the organization itself. Furthermore, Quick and McFadyen (2017) address the issue of lower levels of productivity. If caring about the welfare of people is not enough incentive to view SH as a serious social
problem, organizations should, at the very least, consider the fact that their output will suffer if they continue to underestimate the impact SH has on their organization and climate.

Organizations are in a complicated situation: on one hand, they are interested in preservation of their image and reputation; on the other, they have to address the employee who, after reporting SH, wants “…justice, fair treatment, and remediation” (Quick & McFadyen, 2017, p. 289). In any case, an organization’s image will not be persevered if it is discovered that employees are harassed and their subsequent complaints are not taken seriously. Perhaps an organization’s image and reputation would be enhanced by having SH policies that are active, up-to-date, and enforced.

Conclusion on Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment has been rigorously studied. We understand the social dynamics leading to its occurrence, organizational and individual variables that increase the likelihood of it occurring, and the consequences that it has for individuals and organizations alike. We know that, by and large, women are typically the survivors of SH and men are typically the perpetrators. In order to reduce SH occurring, organizational climate needs to be improved so that an environment where women will have the courage (and support) necessary to know they do not need to tolerate this behavior.

Present Study

Elkins et al. (2008) conducted a study that inspired the direction of my research. These researchers created a scenario where a woman was sexually
assaulted, she filed a grievance, investigators were hired/assigned, they reached a conclusion to determine if SH occurred or not, and the participants reading about the scenario were to decide if this procedure was just or unjust. The dependent variable was the perceptions of justice from participants reading the scenario and the independent variables included elements of internal or external investigators, the gender of the investigators, and the conclusions of the investigators. Furthermore, their aim was to understand how bystanders of sexual harassment would influence survivors of sexual harassment to pursue litigation.

Elkins et al. (2008) have already studied job-gender context, observer’s influence on litigation pursuit, internal versus external investigators, conclusions those investigators make, perceived justice of those conclusions by participants, and the gender of those investigators. I focused mainly on the gender of the investigator, as well as the different conclusions they make for three reason: first, Elkins et al. have already identified different justice perceptions for participants when the investigator is male or female; second, I want to know and understand what this will mean for men whose task it is to investigate SH grievances for female coworkers; third, by understanding social identity, SH, and justice perceptions influencing each other, I want to know if there are theoretical consequences on constructs such as justice. For this latter point, elaborated differently, could justice be viewed, understood, and perceived as a product of ingroup security or enhancement? In other words, should justice be different or separate from ingroup sustainability?
In their study, Elkins et al. (2008) found significant differences between female participants’ perceptions of justice if the investigator was a man or woman. When participants evaluated justice perceptions among the investigators, female investigators had higher levels of justice perceptions than male investigators (regardless of the conclusion that a female investigator made). Justice perceptions among participants were also higher when a male investigator said yes, but they were lowest when a male investigator said no. With a majority of participants being female, justice perceptions were higher when their ingroup was protected, but low when their ingroup was threatened.

The major differences between the scenarios of these groups of participants (that I wish to emphasize in my study) was the gender of the investigators and the conclusion those investigators made about SH (Elkins et al., 2008). Procedures that were carried out were the same across each group. Rudman et al. (1995) have argued that “process-related determinations have been revealed as more influential components of post hoc fairness evaluations than outcome-based determinations” (p. 521). If this is true, as long as procedures in these organizations remain the same, the procedural components should be more influential than the outcomes. However, Elkins et al. (2008) appear to have found another component influencing that outcome. There are group dynamics between genders that influence whether or not perceptions of justice will be achieved. A close reading of Brewer (1999) will demonstrate the logic behind the view that individuals show preference and an increased motivation to secure the benefit and well-being of their in-groups. Sometimes,
that can lead to hostile or, more commonly, indifferent views and attitudes towards those who are not a part of the ingroup. Because this relationship was not specifically examined in Elkins et al. (2008), it is something that I wish to explore. Consequently, I predicted that ingroup membership will positively predict justice perceptions.

- Hypothesis 1: Gender identity will positively predict justice perceptions.
  
  Participants with high levels of gender identity will have higher justice (distributive and procedural) perceptions, except for when a male investigator denies SH.

Ingroup and Outgroup Dynamics

Elkins et al. (2008) demonstrated how gender moderates the relationship in the decisions made and perceptions of distributive justice. Rudman et al. (1995) said that procedures are better predictors of justice evaluations than outcomes. Outcomes and procedures are both important elements in order to establish perceptions of justice, but how much does gender identity impact the evaluation of these processes and outcomes? The main purpose of this study was to examine that influence and relationship.

People can be associated with many groups at any given time. Understanding how one feels about their own group identity will provide further justification for the hypotheses that I proposed. When individuals belong to ingroups, there is a bond that ties them together, as well as providing them with a strong sense of identity (Rubin, Milanov, & Paolini, 2016). They are also evaluated higher on factors such as trust, friendship, and honesty (Brewer,
Rubin et al. (2016) highlight the emphasis that Western cultures put on “true friendship” and “loyalty” to ingroup members (p. 226). Would this not then lead members who belong to an ingroup of gender to be more inclined to preserve their group membership? Could this be a factor influencing the outcomes found in Elkins et al. (2008)?

Hays-Thomas (2017), in her writings on diversity, describes favoritism towards members of the ingroup and a bias, or discrimination, towards members of the outgroup as a consistent pattern. Part of this favoritism comes from the desire to maintain, enhance, and/or secure a positive social identity that is derived from various groups that people belong to (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). As it pertains to this study, when assessments are made by male or female investigators, participants should be more likely to trust the assessment made by the investigator if they are a member of their ingroup. In other words, a female investigator, who says “yes” or “no” to the grievance of SH, should be evaluated more fairly by a female participant because they trust that investigator since they are both members of the same ingroup. Likewise, a male investigator (outgroup member), who says “yes” to an SH grievance filed by a female, is not engaging in any behavior that would inhibit or reduce the credibility of the female’s claim; this assessment will be trusted and viewed as fair. However, if a male investigator says “no” to a female’s report, this might be viewed as something that will harm the ingroup’s credibility, experience, and progression. Therefore, this evaluation will not be trusted, as it is coming from someone who is a member of the outgroup. To test this idea, I proposed the following hypotheses:
Hypothesis 2: Gender of the investigator will predict justice perceptions, such that female investigators will be perceived as more just than male investigators.

Hypothesis 3: The decision of the investigator will positively predict justice. When an investigator says yes, participants will perceive higher levels of justice. When a female investigator says no, as a member of the ingroup, she will still be perceived as just. When a male investigator says no, low levels of justice will occur.

Hypothesis 4: The conclusion that the investigator makes will moderate the relationship between the gender of the investigator and the perceptions of justice (see Figure 1). When the investigator says yes, there will be no differences in justice perceptions regardless of the investigators sex. When the investigator says no, justice perceptions will be lower for male investigators, and higher for female investigators.

Elkins et al. (2008) found that male investigators who determined that sexual harassment had not occurred had lower levels of perceptions of justice. With the research that has been covered thus far, women are clearly the disadvantaged group that experiences SH. Cichocka, Marchlew, Golec de Zavala, and Olechowski (2016) outline some of the perceptions that people of disadvantage groups develop. One of the perceptions they suggest is the conspiracy mentality. Before discussing conspiracy mentalities further, it is important to also acknowledge the point that Cichokca et al. (2016) made when they said that “…disadvantaged groups often have objective reasons to believe
that powerful groups act against them” (p. 557). While I am using the expression “conspiracy mentalities,” I am not suggesting that women who have such beliefs are without justification. Quite the contrary, women are absolutely justified in whatever perceptions they have about men’s mistreatment of them. An examination of all the research covered thus far should, at the very least, merit empathy towards women in organizations, especially to those who have experienced SH. Furthermore, we cannot ignore or deny the fact that the prominent perpetrators of SH have been men.

Some elements that have been associated with the conspiracy mentality include feelings of limited influence over their lives, deprivation, powerlessness, uncertainty, and low self-esteem (Cichocka et al., 2016). These perceptions are also prevalent among women who are survivors of sexual harassment (Bargh et al., 1995; Bergman et al., 2002; Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Gutek & Koss, 1993; McDonald, 2012; Rudman et al., 1995; Schneider et al., 1997; Szymanksi & Feltman, 2015). It is paramount to understand that it is past experience of oppression and mistreatment that fosters this mentality. Past experience drives these perceptions and women who have experienced it should be more likely to endorse them. Considering Elkins et al. (2008), could it be that women felt a greater sense of injustice had been done after a male investigator said that SH did not occur because of ingroup and outgroup dynamics? In other words, are men, the more “powerful” group, “out to get” women when they refute their grievances?
A major reason why women do not report their abuse is because of their fear of retaliation (Rudman et al., 1995). Feelings of threat can promote thoughts or beliefs about conspiracy mentalities (Cichocka et al., 2016). With fear and threat of retaliation, women will be less likely to report it. When women do report it, and a member of the outgroup says that it didn’t occur, the ingroup’s interests are in jeopardy. For example, the women, after being denied justice, is being fit or molded into a category of being too sensitive, overly emotional, anti-male, or “blowing things out of proportion.” A component of these conspiracy beliefs comes from collective narcissism (Cichocka et al., 2016). This mindset includes the positive appraisal of one’s own group, with the belief that outgroup members do not appreciate it. Additionally, it is associated with a high level of sensitivity to threats to their image and reputation. “Collective narcissism is associated with defensive intergroup hostility and sensitivity to threats to the ingroup’s image” (Cichocka et al., 2016, p. 558). By invalidating women’s experiences at work, could male investigators’ assessments be deemed and/or viewed as hostility towards the women merely because they are women? In contrast, as Elkins et al. (2008) found, women will still perceive justice when a female investigator says that sexual harassment did not occur. As a member of the ingroup, a female investigator who said no to a SH grievance will probably be perceived as not wanting to do something that would harm the ingroup.

I proposed that the level at which female participants identify with their gender will impact how they determine if male or female investigators are perceived as just. For example, a woman with low gender identity will most likely
not be influenced by the gender of the investigator. Regardless of whether or not a man or woman says yes or no, they will be more inclined to look at the situation. In other words, they will look at procedural and distributive justice components that the investigator operated with and base their perceptions off of. In short, with lower levels of gender identity, the sex of the investigator or their decision will not impact the perceptions of justice.

In contrast, someone with high levels of gender identity will impact the influence that the sex and decision made by the investigator has on their justice perceptions. For example, when a male or female investigator say yes to a sexual harassment claim, according to social identity theory, the ingroup is not being threatened, their credibility being reduced, or their complaint disregarded. Rather, they are being supported and maintained in that process. Additionally, I would expect that a female who says no to the sexual harassment claim would also, again, based on social identity theory, be more inclined to perceive justice. This is in large part due to the fact that it is a member of the ingroup who is making this claim; a member of the ingroup, theoretically speaking, would not do something to harm the ingroup unless the denial of the claim came with sufficient justification. In other words, procedural and distributive justice perceptions are enhanced when the decision made by an ingroup investigator negates the claim of the ingroup survivor. Consequently, a female participant with high levels of gender identity will perceive more justice when a female investigator denies the claim. However, it is when a male investigator (a member of the outgroup) denies the SH allegation that justice perceptions will be lowered. Perhaps the male
investigator is sexist, does not take women’s suffering seriously, or, based on social identity theory, does not take much thought or consideration of outgroup member’s experiences. With these thoughts in mind, I proposed the following:

- **Hypothesis 5**: Participants with high levels of gender identity will have higher justice perceptions when the investigator is female and when the male investigator says yes, but low justice perceptions when the male investigator denies SH (see Figure 1). Participants with low levels of gender identity will not be influenced by the conclusion or the gender of the investigator (see Figure 2).

![Investigator Responses to SH](image)

**Figure 1. Perceptions of Justice for Participants with High Levels of Gender Identity**
Conspiracy Mentalities

It is worth noting that conspiracy mentalities have been reported in higher amounts for people who have experienced discriminatory, unjust, or immoral treatment at the hands of a more powerful outgroup (Cichocka et al., 2016). With that experience comes greater intolerance for outgroup members and increased explanations of a negative nature for outgroup behavior. Given the patterns that have been found in both sexual harassment experiences and the development of conspiracy mentalities, women who have experienced sexual harassment in the past are likely to adopt conspiracy mentalities about men’s mistreatment of women. In other words, these conspiracy mentalities will be a contributing factor in the relationship between sexual harassment conclusions and perceptions of justice because they affect attribution of behavior.
Hypothesis 6: Conspiracy mentalities will mediate the relationship between participants’ experience of sexual harassment and justice perceptions. Past experiences with sexual harassment will lead to higher conspiracy mentalities. Past experiences with sexual harassment will lead to higher levels of justice when the ingroup is being validated and when a member of the ingroup (female investigator) denies sexual harassment. Past experience with sexual harassment will lead to lower levels of justice when the ingroup is being invalidated by an outgroup member (male investigator) because the outgroup is harming the ingroup.

Perhaps not all participants will have experienced SH in their lifetime. Or if they have experienced it, they have not fit the traditional explanation for conspiracy mentalities. Simply put, perhaps participants will report lower and/or higher levels of conspiracy mentalities than other participants. For those participants who do report lower levels of conspiracy mentalities, they will be more inclined to base their fairness evaluation off procedural and distributive justice components rather than the social dynamic of ingroup and outgroup exchanges. For example, female participants with lower levels of conspiracy mentalities, regardless of the gender or conclusion of the investigator, will be more likely to perceive higher levels of justice, even when the conclusion negates the survivor’s claim.

In contrast, female participants who have higher levels of conspiracy mentalities will be more inclined and motivated to secure the well-being, reputation, and credibility of their ingroup member who was sexually harassed.
Similar to our hypotheses about levels of gender identity, participants reporting higher levels of conspiracy mentalities will perceive higher levels of justice when a male and/or female investigator confirms the SH allegation and when a female investigator tells them no, because a female would not do something to harm the ingroup (thereby giving greater weight to procedural and distributive justice). Likewise, when a male investigator negates a sexual harassment claim, participants with higher levels of conspiracy mentalities will be more inclined to explain outgroup behavior as out to get them, being untrusting of women, and exerting dominance over women. The final hypothesis is as follows:

- **Hypothesis 7: Conspiracy mentality of the participant will moderate the relationship between sexual harassment conclusions, sex of the investigator, and justice perceptions. Participants with higher levels of conspiracy mentalities will perceive higher levels of justice when the investigator is female regardless (see Figure 3) of their decision and male investigators will be perceived as less just when they deny the SH claim (see Figure 4).**
Figure 3. Perceptions of Justice for Participants with High Levels of Conspiracy Mentalities

Figure 4. Perceptions of Justice for Participants with Low Levels of Conspiracy Mentalities
In summary, I assessed seven hypotheses, all of which examined the relationships between sexual harassment, ingroup and outgroup dynamics, conspiracy mentalities, and justice perceptions. Overall, with ingroup and outgroup membership in mind, I expected to see group membership playing a significant role in how one determines or perceives justice and fairness with regard to the outcomes of a sexual harassment investigation.
Participants

Participants \((N = 501)\) were recruited through social media \((n = 365)\) and introductory psychology courses \((n = 136)\). Since the focus of this study was to evaluate female perceptions of justice, men were not considered for the final analysis. Neither were participants who did not complete the survey. Only female participants and completed responses were analyzed \((N = 283)\).

Out of the total sample \((N = 283)\), one participant did not answer questions pertaining to race, age, socioeconomic status, work history, or experiencing SH. However, all other aspects of the survey were completed. Participants reported their ethnicity as White \((n = 254, 90\%)\), Hispanic or Latino \((n = 15, 5\%)\), mixed ethnicity \((n = 8, 2\%)\), Asian \((n = 3, 1\%)\), African American \((n =1, .4\%)\) and American Indian \((n = 1, .4\%)\). Ages ranged from 18 to 72 \((M = 29.27)\). When participants were growing up (0 – 16 years old), three reported as being very poor (1%), 31 had barely enough to get by (11%), 131 had enough to get by (46%), 82 had more than enough to get by (29%), 31 were well to do (11%), and four were extremely well to do (1%). For work history, the number of years work ranged from 0 – 40 \((M = 10.24)\). Finally, participants were asked to report how often they have been recipients of sexual harassment. Fifty-five percent \((n = 155)\) said yes, 33% said no \((n = 95)\), and 11% were not sure \((n = 32)\). Since this
response was open ended and reported qualitatively, averages cannot be accurately assessed. However, responses ranged from 0-36, with comments also saying, “100s over a lifetime,” “too much to count,” and “more than I can count.”

Procedure

Participants were given a link to a Qualtrics survey. Once they gave their consent to participate, they were asked to report their gender (male, female, or other). If they chose any option besides female, they were thanked for their willingness to participate and were not considered for further analysis. If participants selected their gender as female, they were given instructions that they were going to read a scenario involving sexual harassment.

All scenarios involved a female worker who was allegedly sexually harassed by a male supervisor. The survivor reported the grievance to corporate, who then sent an HR representative to investigate the situation. After the investigation was completed, the investigator reached a conclusion. The differences between the four scenarios involved the gender of the investigator (male or female) and the conclusion that they reached ("yes" or "no"). Scenario 1 involved a female investigator who concluded that sexual harassment had occurred, Scenario 2 involved a female investigator who concluded that sexual harassment had not occurred, Scenario 3 involved a male investigator who concluded that sexual harassment had occurred, and Scenario 4 involved a male investigator who concluded that sexual harassment had not occurred.

Participants were then randomly assigned to one of the four scenarios. Sixty-
eight were assigned to Scenario 1, 77 were assigned to Scenario 2, 69 were assigned to Scenario 3, and 69 were assigned to Scenario 4.

After reading the scenario, participants were asked questions about their thoughts, feelings, and reactions to the scenario they read; their levels of gender identity; procedural justice (whether they thought it was consistent); distributive justice (whether they thought the outcome was fair); positive and negative affect (PANAS); conspiracy mentalities; finally, they were asked to complete a series of demographic questionnaires including their ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, years of work experience, their education level, and if they had ever been a victim of sexual harassment.

Once these questions were completed, they were provided with a debriefing form explaining the intent of the research by examining group identity and justice perceptions involving sexual harassment. We also provided practical benefits that would stem from this research, as well as the theoretical nature of this phenomenon. If participants were unsettled by anything that they read in this survey, they were given contact information for people or organizations they could contact for support.

Measures

Positive and Negative Affective Schedule (PANAS)

In order to strengthen my confidence that participants’ responses were influenced by gender identity, I controlled for their positive and negative affective moods. This was done by utilizing the Positive and Negative Affective Schedule (PANAS) scale (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). These are important variables
to consider because of their influence on variables such as “anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness” (Watson et al., 1988, p. 1063). Furthermore, there is evidence that these states influence levels of emotionality and psychological sensitivity to reward and punishment. It was possible that participants may respond to these SH scenarios because of high or low levels of positive and/or negative affectivity.

For the purposes of this study, I utilized a 20 item PANAS scale, where variables (e.g., distressed, hostile, strong, proud, nervous, attentive, etc.) are addressed to participants and they have to rate how much they generally feel these emotions. They responded using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (slightly or not at all) to 5 (very much). For the PANAS, Walter et al. (1988) reported the positive affect had Cronbach’s alpha ranging from .86 to .90 and the negative affect ranging from .84 to .87.

In the current study, items were separated to create two separate variables: Positive Affectivity and Negative Affectivity. Each construct consisted of 10 items. For Positive Affectivity, Cronbach’s Alpha = .882, and for Negative Affectivity, Cronbach’s Alpha = .885. For a complete examination of the PANAS, please see Appendix F.

**Gender Identification Scale (GIS)**

In her efforts to study discrimination and ingroup/outgroup dynamics, Takacs (2011) utilized a Gender Identification Scale (GIS) to examine the level that a female identifies with being female. Participants were presented with 12 items, where response options on a 7-point scale ranged from -3 (strongly
disagree) to 3 (strongly agree). After reading the response items (i.e., “I feel strong ties with other women”), participants rated to what level they agree with that. Participants in the present study were asked the same series of questions. The GIS had a Cronbach’s alpha = .73. For a complete examination of the GIS, see Appendix G.

Conspiracy Mentalities Scale (CMS)

While Cichocka et al. (2016) was examining conspiracy mentalities, they cited Bilewicz, Winiewski, Kofta, and Wojcik (2013), who conducted a principal component analysis for an Anti-Semitism Scale to assess negative views that people would have against a particular outgroup; in this case, that outgroup was Jews. Their scale had 12 items where participants were required to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each statement on a Likert type scale. Content of the CMS was turned from Jews to men, and participants were asked the same sets of questions. For the present study, the CMS had a Cronbach’s alpha = .704. For a complete examination of the CMS, see Appendix H.

Combined Procedural & Distributive Justice

Procedural justice has largely been influenced and determined by elements surrounding consistency, allowing one to voice their opinions, and allowing individuals to influence the outcome (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt & Rodell, 2015). It is also associated with rules that are put in place; if these rules are kept and followed, then the likelihood of procedural justice being perceived is more likely.
To assess procedural justice in this study, we will be using items from Colquitt (2001) and Colquitt and Rodell (2015). These items were slightly adjusted so that they fit the domain of my scenario, but the underlying concepts were the same. Four items will be utilized and consisted of the following: “Do you feel the investigator applied procedures consistently,” “Were the investigator’s procedures free of bias,” “Were the investigator’s procedures based on accurate information,” “Did the investigator uphold ethical and moral standards.” For a complete examination of the procedural justice scale, see Appendix I.

To evaluate how participants perceived the fairness of the investigator’s decision, I used the four-item scaled used from Elkins et al. (2008, p. 95). These items were implemented for my assessment of distributive fairness: “In my opinion, the investigator’s decision in this scenario was fair,” “Overall, I am satisfied with the investigator’s decision in this scenario,” “I feel that the investigator’s decision regarding whether sexual harassment occurred was fair,” “Overall, I feel that the investigator’s decision in this scenario was unfair,” and “I am dissatisfied with the investigator’s decision regarding whether sexual harassment occurred in this scenario.” Elkins et al’ (2008) determined that high scores on this scale were manifestations of high levels of fairness. In the present study, combining these scales into one scale delivered a Cronbach’s alpha = .966. For the sample in Elkins et al., the coefficient alpha was 0.93. For a complete examination of the distributive justice scale, see Appendix J.

Overall Fairness
As a manipulation check, I asked participants at the end of each scenario, on a Likert type scale, if they thought the overall process was fair or not, 1 being “totally unfair” to 7 being “perfectly fair.” This was done by simply asking, “Do you think this process was fair or unfair?” In order to better assess and understand why people think the process is fair or not, I included an open-ended item where I asked participants to explain their reasoning. For a complete examination of the overall fairness questionnaire, please see Appendix K.
CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

Data Screening

Using SPSS 24, variables were examined to identify outliers, skewness, kurtosis, normal distribution, missing value analysis, and multicollinearity for the following continuous variables using the z-score criterion +/- 3.3, \( p < .001 \): social gender identity, conspiracy mentalities, justice perceptions, positive affectivity, negative affectivity, age, and work history. There was no multicollinearity found among any of the variables.

For social gender identity, there was one outlier (raw score = 2.58, z-score = -3.82). Since we were measuring perceptions of females in the workforce and that this variable was not abnormally spread across other responses, it was argued that this participant was indeed a part of the population being measured. Therefore, this participant was not deleted from further analysis. There was a slight negative skew (-3.47, \( p < .001 \)), but no kurtosis. Again, since perceptual processes were being examined among women and their varying levels of gender identity, participants were not deleted or removed from further analysis.

For conspiracy mentalities and justice perceptions, there were no outliers, skewness, or kurtosis. Likewise, there were no outliers or kurtosis for positive or negative affect, but there was significant skewness for positive affect (z = -3.34, \( p < .001 \)) and negative affect (z-score = 3.81). For age, two cases were reported
missing, there was one outlier (raw score = 72, z-score = 4.06), and there was
significant skewness (z skew = 10.23, p < .001) and kurtosis (z kurtosis = 6.54).

With years of work history, three outliers were discovered, three of which had the
same raw score and z-score (raw score = 40, z-score = 3.62, p < .001), there
was significant skewness (z score = 10.23, p < .001) and kurtosis (z score = 7.02, p < .001). None of these cases were deleted. See Table 1 for a complete
examination of skewness and kurtosis for all the variables and Table 2 for a
complete examination of all demographic data.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Skewness, Kurtosis, Z Skew, and Z Kurtosis for Continuous Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skewness (z) Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis (z) Kurtosis</th>
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<tr>
<td>Gender Identity</td>
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<td>0.74</td>
<td>-0.503</td>
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<td>Conspiracy Mentalities</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Overall Justice Perceptions</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice</td>
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<td>1.61</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Affectivity</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>*-3.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>*3.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>29.28</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>*10.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work History</td>
<td>10.16</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>*10.23</td>
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* indicates significant skew or kurtosis at p < .001.
| Table 2. Demographic Variables |

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<th>Participant Gender</th>
<th>N (%)</th>
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<td>Female</td>
<td>283</td>
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<td>White/Caucasian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(5.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
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<td>(1.06%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>(0.35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(2.83%)</td>
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<td>High School Diploma</td>
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<td>(3.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
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<td>Associates/Vocational</td>
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<td>(9.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor's Degree</td>
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<td>(35%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Master's Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctorate Degree (PhD, EdD)</td>
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<th>Socioeconomic Status</th>
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<td>Very poor, not enough to get by</td>
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<tr>
<td>Barely enough to get by</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>(11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had enough to get by, but not many &quot;extras&quot;</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>(46.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had more than enough to get by</td>
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<td>(29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well to do</td>
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<td>(11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely well to do</td>
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<td>(1.4%)</td>
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<th>Experience with SH</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>(54.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>(33.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>(11.3%)</td>
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<td>26-35</td>
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<td>36-45</td>
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<td>(8.5%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>56-65</td>
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<td>(3.89%)</td>
</tr>
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<td>66-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
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<td>(30.04%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
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<td>(15.9%)</td>
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<td>(3.18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
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<td>(2.12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1.06%)</td>
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</table>
Test of Hypotheses

I first hypothesized that gender identity would positively predict justice perceptions. In other words, the only time justice perceptions would be low was when a male investigator denied the SH claim, whereas the ingroup (females) would feel that their ingroup’s security was being supported, enhanced, and secured. A simple linear regression was utilized to analyze this prediction. Gender identity did not predict justice perceptions, $R = .003, R^2 = .000, F(1, 281) = .003, p = .478$. None of the variance in justice perceptions can be explained or accounted for by participants’ level of gender identity. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

Second, I predicted that the gender of the investigators in each scenario would predict justice perceptions, such that female investigators would be perceived as more just than male investigators. A simple linear regression was used to predict this relationship, and it was determined the gender of the investigator in each scenario did not predict justice, $R = .046, R^2 = .002, F(1, 281) = .604, p = .438$. Less than 1% of the variance in justice perceptions can be accounted for by the gender of the investigator in each scenario. The average scores for justice perceptions were different between scenarios, but not as a function of the gender of the investigator. Justice perceptions were higher when a female confirmed SH (Scenario 1, $M = 5.23$) or a male confirmed SH (Scenario 3, $M = 5.53$) than they were when a female denied SH (Scenario 2, $M = 2.87$) or a male investigator denied SH (Scenario 4, $M = 2.83$). In other words, gender of
the investigator had nothing to do with justice perceptions, but the conclusion of
the investigator did. Consequently, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. See Table 2
for distribution of statistical output for the four scenarios.

Table 3: Mean and SD Scores for Gender Identity, Conspiracy Mentality, and Justice Perceptions for Each Scenario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Gender Identity M</th>
<th>Gender Identity SD</th>
<th>Justice Perceptions M</th>
<th>Justice Perceptions SD</th>
<th>Conspiracy Mentalities M</th>
<th>Conspiracy Mentalities SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 (Female_Yes)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5.45</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (Female_No)</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (Male_Yes)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 (Male_No)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For my third hypothesis, I predicted that the decision of the investigator
would positively predict justice, such that means would be higher for Scenarios 1,
2, and 3, but would be low for 4. A simple linear regression was utilized and there
was a significant relationship between the decision of the investigator and justice
perceptions, $R = .690, R^2 = .447, F (1, 281) = 256.046, p < .001$. Despite this
significant relationship, it was predicted that justice perceptions would only be
low for Scenario 4. As indicated in Table 2, Scenarios 2 and Scenario 4 both had
low justice perceptions (see Figure 5). Furthermore, it was also argued that
Scenario 2 (a female investigator who says no) would be inclined to perceive
justice since, as a female, she is part of the ingroup. This was simply not the
case; both men and women were perceived with low justice and 44.7% of the
variation in justice perceptions can be accounted for by the decision of the investigator. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was only partially supported.

Figure 5. Justice Perceptions for Participants in all four Scenarios: Scenario 1 (Female Confirms SH), Scenario 2 (Female Denies SH), Scenario 3 (Male Confirms SH), and Scenario 4 (Male Denies SH).

The fourth hypothesis argued the conclusion of the investigator will moderate the relationship between the gender of the investigator and the perceptions of justice. In other words, justice perceptions would be the same when an investigator says yes to a sexual harassment claim, regardless of the gender. When the answer is no, justice perceptions would be higher for female participants than for male participants. When examining direct effects, there were no significant differences in justice perceptions when the investigator was male.
(M = 4.18) or female (M = 4.05), signifying that the gender of the investigator had no impact on perceptions of justice, \( F(1, 279) = .663, p = .416 \). Examining direct effects for the decision of the investigator revealed significant mean differences between investigators who said yes (M = 5.38) or no (M = 2.85), signifying that the decision of the investigator predicted justice perceptions, \( F(1, 279) = 255.9, p < .001 \). Participants were far more likely to perceive justice when the answer was yes compared to when the answer was no, regardless of the investigator’s gender. When examining the interaction between all of these variables, there was no significant interaction, \( F(1, 279) = 1.061, p = .304 \). This makes intuitive sense, especially when considering that there was no relationship between the gender of the investigator and perceptions of justice. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

For the fifth hypothesis, I predicted that participants with high levels of gender identity will have higher justice perceptions when the investigator is female and when the conclusion of the investigator is yes, but low justice perceptions when the male investigator denies SH. An ANOVA was used to determine the averages between the groups, followed by a Tukey’s HSD post hoc analysis. There were significant mean differences depending on the scenario that participants were in, \( F(3, 280) = 59.368, p < .001 \), partial eta squared = .530. However, average scores were loaded onto the same subset exclusively by the decision, not the gender, of the investigator. When the decisions for the investigators were both “no,” the average score for females (M = 2.87) were the same as males (M = 2.83). The gender of the investigator did not matter; justice
perceptions were low when the decision was no. When the decision of the investigators was “yes,” the average score for females ($M = 5.23$) was the same as males ($M = 5.52$). Again, it was not the gender of the investigator that seemed to influence justice perceptions because those scores were high when the decision was yes. Therefore, Hypothesis 5 was only partially supported.

Sixth, I predicted that conspiracy mentalities would mediate the relationship between participants’ experience of sexual harassment and justice perceptions. In other words, having a past experience with SH would lead to higher conspiracy mentalities, which would influence perceptions of justice. The prediction was not significant, $R = .096$, $R^2 = .009$, $F(2, 281) = 1.284$, $p = .279$. Participants’ perceptions of justice were not influenced by their experiences of SH, neither were they contributing to their levels of conspiracy mentalities. Therefore, Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

Finally, I predicted that conspiracy mentalities would moderate a relationship between the conclusions the investigator makes, the sex of the investigator, and justice perceptions. If they had higher conspiracy mentalities, they would have higher justice perceptions when the investigator was female and when the investigator confirms the SH grievance, but low levels of justice when a male investigator denies the SH claim. There was no significant relationship between the gender of the investigator and justice perceptions, $F(1, 282) = .992$, $p = .321$. Average scores for male investigators ($M = 4.31$) and female investigators ($M = 4.08$) were not significantly different. Therefore, there would be
no relationship that conspiracy mentalities would moderate between these variables.

There was a significant relationship between the decision that the investigator made and justice perceptions, $F(1, 282) = 146.729, p < .001$. Average scores for justice perceptions when investigators confirming sexual harassment ($M = 5.43$) were significantly higher than when investigators denied sexual harassment ($M = 2.90$). The justice perceptions, therefore, were influenced more by the decision in and of itself than they were by the gender of the investigator.

The interaction for conspiracy mentalities on these relationships was not significant, $F(16, 267) = .765, p = .723$. Conspiracy mentalities did not influence justice perceptions regardless of the gender or the conclusion of the investigator. Therefore, hypothesis seven was not supported.

Supplemental Analysis

A second analysis was performed on the dependent variable (justice perceptions) where distributive and procedural justice were not combined into one justice scale but were separated into two distinct constructs. This was done to determine if the results would be the same as the first analysis when justice was just one scale. For a breakdown of Pearson’s Correlation, see Table 4. This analysis was done to substantiate the claim that the observed relationships on the two forms of justice were the same whether these constructs were separated or combined.
For Hypothesis 1, I predicted that gender identity would predict both procedural and distributive justice. Results revealed that gender identity did not predict procedural justice, $R = .009$, $R^2 = .000$, $F (1, 281) = .025$, $p = .874$, or distributive justice, $R = .011$, $R^2 = .000$, $F (1, 281) = .033$, $p = .855$ Essentially, 0% of the variance in both types of justice can be accounted for by gender identity. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was not supported.

For Hypothesis 2, I predicted that the gender of the investigator in each of the four scenarios would predict both procedural and distributive justice perceptions. Results revealed that the gender of the investigator did not predict procedural justice, $R = .005$, $R^2 = .000$, $F (1, 281) = .006$, $p = .938$. Zero percent of the variance in procedural justice perceptions can be accounted for by the gender of the investigator. Furthermore, gender of the investigator also did not predict distributive justice perceptions, $R = .069$, $R^2 = .005$, $F (1, 281) = 1.33$, $p = .250$. Less than 1% of the variance in distributive justice perceptions can be accounted for by the gender of the investigator.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Among Independent and Dependent Variable Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Justice_Index</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Procedural</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Distributive</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. GIS_Index</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>-0.022</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. CMS_Index</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>-0.045</td>
<td>-0.085</td>
<td>0.111*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Experienced_SH</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.067</td>
<td>0.114*</td>
<td>-0.054</td>
<td>-0.025</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Gender_Investigator</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-0.002</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>-0.069</td>
<td>-0.032</td>
<td>-0.031</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Decision_Investigator</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.501</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.625</td>
<td>0.686</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.038</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>-0.014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* indicates a significance level at $p < .05$
accounted for by the gender of the investigator. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

For Hypothesis 3, I predicted that the decision of the investigator would predict both procedural and distributive justice. Results revealed that I can significantly predict procedural justice from the decision of the investigator, \( R = .626, R^2 = .392, F(1, 281) = 181.204, p < .001 \). For procedural justice, 39.2% of the variance can be accounted for by the decision of the investigator. Furthermore, I can significantly predict distributive justice from the decision of the investigator, \( R = .687, R^2 = .473, F(1, 281) = 251.738, p < .001 \). For distributive justice, 47.3% of the variance can be accounted for by the decision of the investigator. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

For Hypothesis 4, I predicted that the decision of the investigator would moderate the relationship between the gender of the investigator and justice perceptions (i.e., procedural and distributive). Results from Hypothesis 2 reveal that there was no significant relationship between the gender of the investigator and procedural justice, \( R = .005, R^2 = .000, F(1, 281) = .006, p = .938 \), or distributive justice, \( R = .069, R^2 = .005, F(1, 281) = 1.33, p = .250 \). While there was a significant prediction, this was not in the direction that I predicted (see Table 5). Since differences in distributive and procedural justice were independent of the investigator’s gender, Hypothesis 4 is only partially supported.
Table 5. Means and SDs for Separated Procedural and Distributive Justice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant Scenario</th>
<th>Procedural Justice</th>
<th>Distributive Justice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 1 (Female_Yes)</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 2 (Female_No)</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 3 (Male_Yes)</td>
<td>5.24</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario 4 (Male_No)</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For Hypothesis 5, I predicted that GIS would moderate the relationship between gender of the investigator and the decision of the investigator with overall, procedural, and distributive justice. There was no significant interaction for overall justice. There was a significant interaction between the investigator’s gender and procedural justice, as well as a two-way interaction between GIS, the decision of the investigator, and procedural justice, $R = .638$, $R^2 = .407$, $F (6, 282) = 31.58$, $p < .001$. Gender of the investigator and the two-way interaction of GIS and the decision of the investigator accounted for 40.7% of the variance in procedural justice. Procedural justice was negatively and significantly correlated with the gender of the investigator ($r = -0.73$, $p = 0.04$). Procedural justice was also positively and significantly correlated with the two-way interaction of GIS and the decision of the investigator ($r = .78$, $p = .03$). At the low point for gender identity, procedural justice scores were higher for males and lower for females. At the midpoint of gender identity, scores were about the same for all scenarios, but were highest for males and lower for females. Finally, at the high point for gender identity, procedural justice scores were lower for males and higher for females (see Figure 6).
Using the same analysis for distributive justice in hypothesis 5, there was a significant main effect for the gender of the investigator and a two-way interaction between gender identity and the decision of the investigator, $R = .699$, $R^2 = .489$, $F(6, 282) = 44.019$, $p < .001$. In this model, 48.9% of the variance in distributive justice can be accounted for by the gender of the investigator and the two-way interaction of the decision of the investigator and gender identity. Distributive justice was negatively and significantly correlated with the gender of the investigator ($r = -.69$, $p = .04$). Distributive justice was also positively and significantly correlated with the gender of the investigator and gender identity ($r = .67$, $p = .04$). At the low point for gender identity, distributive justice was highest for males and lower for females. At the midpoint for gender identity, average scores for distributive justice were about the same, although males were rated slightly higher than females. Finally, at the high point for gender identity,
distributive justice scores were lower for investigators who said yes and higher for investigators who said no regardless of the investigator’s gender (see Figure 7). Since there was no interaction as predicted by Hypothesis 5, this hypothesis is not supported.

Figure 7. Distributive Justice Interactions for Investigator Gender, Decision, and GIS.

For Hypothesis 6, I predicted that conspiracy mentalities would mediate the relationship between participants’ experience with SH and justice perceptions (both procedural and distributive). When examining the direct relationship between participants’ experience with SH and procedural justice, there was no significant relationship, $R = .067$, $R^2 = .005$, $F (1, 281) = 1.277$, $p = .259$. Less than 1% of the variance in procedural justice perceptions can be accounted for by participants’ experience with SH. There was also no significant relationship between participants’ experience with SH and distributive justice, $R = .114$, $R^2 = .013$, $F (1, 281) = 3.707$, $p = .055$. For distributive justice, only 1.3% of the
variance in distributive justice can be accounted for by participants’ experience with SH. Since there was no relationship for conspiracy mentalities to mediate, Hypothesis 6 was not supported.

For Hypothesis 7, I predicted that conspiracy mentalities would moderate the relationship between the investigator’s gender, the investigator’s conclusion, and justice perceptions. For overall justice perceptions, there was no significant interaction. For procedural justice, there were significant main effects and two way interactions, but no significant three way interactions, $R = .677$, $R^2 = .458$, $F(7, 282) = 33.249$, $p < .001$. For procedural justice, 45.8% of the variance can be accounted for with main effects conspiracy mentalities, gender of the investigator, and decision of the investigator, and two-way interactions between conspiracy mentalities and the gender of the investigator, and conspiracy mentalities and the decision of the investigator. Procedural justice was negatively and significantly correlated with conspiracy mentalities ($r = -.45$, $p < .001$), gender of the investigator ($r = -.73$, $p = .014$), and decision of the investigator ($r = -.746$, $p = .012$). Procedural justice was positively and significantly correlated with two-way interactions of conspiracy mentalities and the gender of the investigator ($r = .78$), and conspiracy mentalities and the decision of the investigator ($r = 1.47$, $p < .001$). At the low end of conspiracy mentalities, procedural justice scores were higher for males and lower for females; at the midpoint for conspiracy mentalities, procedural justice scores were higher for investigators who said yes and lower for investigators who said no (regardless of investigators’ gender); at the high point for conspiracy mentalities, procedural justice scores were higher
for investigators who said yes and low for investigators who said no (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. Procedural Justice Interactions with CMS, Gender, and Decision of Investigator.

Using the same analysis for distributive justice, there was significant main effects for conspiracy mentalities and gender of the investigator, and two two-way interactions between conspiracy mentalities and both the gender and decision of the investigator, $R = .738$, $R^2 = .545$, $F(7, 282) = 46.997$, $p < .001$. For distributive justice, 54.5% of the variance is accounted for by conspiracy mentalities and the gender of the investigator. Distributive justice was negatively and significantly correlated with conspiracy mentalities ($r = -.44, p < .001$) and the gender of the investigator ($r = -.56, p = .04$), and significantly and positively correlated with the two-way interaction of conspiracy mentalities and the gender of the investigator ($r = .54, p = .049$) and conspiracy mentalities and the decision of the investigator ($r = 1.26, p < .001$). At the low point for conspiracy mentalities,
distributive justice perceptions were slightly higher for males and lower for females; at the midpoint of conspiracy mentalities, distributive justice perceptions were higher for investigators who said yes and lower for investigators who said no; and at the high point for conspiracy mentalities, distributive justice perceptions were lowest for males who said no, followed by females who said no, while distributive justice perceptions were highest for males who said yes, followed by females who said yes (see Figure 9). Since there was no three-way interaction, Hypothesis 7 was not supported.

Figure 9. Distributive Justice Interactions with CMS, Gender, and Decision of Investigator.
CHAPTER FOUR
DISCUSSION

General Discussion

In the present study I explored group identity and its relationship with justice perceptions towards SH. Results suggest ingroup and outgroup dynamics do not influence justice perceptions, but the investigators’ decisions do. These results were not consistent with Elkins et al. (2008), as they found justice levels were influenced by the gender of the investigator. Reasons for the different outcome could be influenced by additional variables considered by Elkins et al. (2008), the vague information in the present study’s scenarios, and emphasis placed on the on evidence.

The argument of this thesis was dependent on participants’ gender identity influencing their levels of justice perceptions. Since this relationship was not significant (i.e., participants were more interested in outcomes than the gender of the investigator who was conducting the investigation), reasons for why justice perceptions were not influenced by gender identity need to be examined. Elkins et al. (2008) included a large array of variables in their study (e.g., male dominated workspace, internal vs. external investigators, perceived bias, litigation endorsement, etc.). These variables interacted with each other to influence justice perceptions and, ultimately, led to higher justice perceptions for female investigators than male investigators. The current study did not include as
much information, including only the gender and decision of the investigator, omitting all other variables that may have contributed to Elkins et al. (2008) research. The increase in variables provided participants with more information and contextual background they could use to formulate their justice perceptions, revealing less room for heuristic judgement.

When this study was initially proposed, the scenarios provided specific steps that the investigator took to reach a conclusion about the SH claim. I was advised by the committee that this type of information should be withheld from participants to better understand the role of gender identity in formulating justice perceptions. In other words, the committee suggested that heuristic judgment (e.g., group identity) would influence perceptions of justice without that information. In addition to the quantitative analysis, I did a qualitative analysis to further examine the thoughts and reactions of participants in their given scenarios. For participants who were in a scenario where the SH claim was denied, withholding this information actually did impact the views that participants had on justice perceptions, but not because of ingroup or outgroup dynamics.

Out of the two scenarios where investigators denied the SH claim \( (n = 113) \), only eight of them reported feeling that it was motivated by sexism (ingroup and outgroup dynamics), stating that the processes were “careless and sexist” or that the “investigator is obviously sexist.” This finding goes completely against what I predicted. Instead, participants expressed that “the situation wasn’t taken seriously,” “didn’t put in enough effort,” or “I don’t think it was thorough,” developing a strong theme for a lack of effort in their investigative process \( (n = \)
36). Another theme was centered on the lack of evidence \((n = 30)\) to reach the actual conclusion, where they expressed thoughts like “I want to know where the investigator actually investigated,” “I want more information,” or “what evidence did [they] find that supports [their] findings.” If they didn’t meet these two criteria, participants expressed sympathies with the survivor and stated the process was not fair \((n = 36)\). Finally, a few participants \((n = 3)\) thought that the steps that were taken were fair, but they disagreed with the solution, expressing things like “I trust that Marsha did her best but at the same time, I am disappointed in the finding, “the HR rep did her job,” or “they looked into it and found nothing wrong with the situation” (See Figure 10). This means that 7% of participants were in accordance with my hypothesis, while 58% were concerned because there was a lack of effort or evidence to justify the conclusion. Past research has found that emphasis on evidence and effort is consistent; feminists were more concerned with evidence than non-feminists and males were (Bhattacharya & Stockdale, 2016). Similar to the present study, these researchers examined perceptions of SH and found that females who felt strongly about their gender (e.g., feminists) put more weight on evidence than any outgroup members did. People do not merely rely or depend on their ingroup identity to formulate justice perceptions, but examine the situation and put weight and emphasis on evidence.
This pattern was not found for participants \((n = 105)\) who were in a scenario where the SH grievance was confirmed. Instead of perceiving that the investigator did not put forth enough effort or gather enough evidence, participants perceived that the investigator did a good job \((n = 45)\), stating things like “the investigator actually followed through,” “did do the proper protocol,” “pleased that it was taken seriously,” “I think it was dealt with professionally,” and “the investigator was thorough and did a great job.” They also felt the outcome was fair \((n = 51)\), stating that they “agree with the outcome,” “the conclusion was completely accurate,” and “[they were] happy sexual harassment was discovered.” These participants felt that the investigation was thorough, professional, prompt, and proper (See Figure 11). Less than 1% of the participants in this scenario were concerned about the lack of evidence or approaches that were made with the investigators \((n = 2)\). In other words,
participants assumed that the investigation was good when the outcome was favorable; when the outcome was not favorable, participants wanted more information about the effort and evidence of the investigation.

![Confirmed SH: Participants Perceptions of Justice](image)

*Figure 11. Themes for why Participants Thought the Process was Fair When Investigators Confirmed SH.*

These observations can be adequately explained by what researchers have called *outcome bias*, which suggests that situations with favorable outcomes are viewed more positively than situations with negative outcomes. This is an important consideration, as researchers have pointed out that these cognitive biases can negatively impact important decisions such as financial investments, medical treatments (Seta, Seta, Petrocelli, & McCormick, 2015), and, in regard to this study, whether or not an organization appropriately handled a SH grievance. Participants took issue when the outcome was unfavorable, questioning the methodology, effort, and evidence of the investigators; when the
outcome was favorable, the methodology, effort, and evidence was proper and professional.

With the framework of ingroup and outgroup dynamics, it was expected that participants’ perceptions of justice would be influenced by the gender of the investigator. In other words, women would be perceived as more just than men. While this relationship was not significant, the pattern did manifest itself. Participants’ justice ratings for females who said yes ($M = 4.15$) were higher than males who said yes ($M = 3.99$), and females who said no ($M = 4.23$) were higher than males who said no ($M = 3.97$). However, these differences were not significant, signifying that justice was not perceived differently across investigators’ gender. Going back to the qualitative analysis, it is clear that no information or a lack of effort contributed to the justice perceptions more than anything else.

The third hypothesis argued the decision of the investigator would positively predict justice. Again, the levels of justice between all four of the scenarios were about the same, signifying that the gender was not impacting justice perceptions, which also explains the finding for hypothesis 5. The fourth hypothesis predicted an interaction, where the decision of the investigator would moderate the relationship between the gender of the investigator and justice perceptions. In other words, the only time we should see low levels of justice is when the male investigator denies SH. Since there was no relationship between the gender of the investigator and justice perceptions, there was no relationship to moderate. Furthermore, there was no significant interaction when I ran the
model; all groups had about the same levels of justice. However, when
accounting for just the decision that the investigator made, there were significant
differences between justice scores when the investigator said yes ($M = 5.38$) or
no ($M = 2.85$). Again, merely being loyal to one’s group was not what mattered,
but evidence and effort did.

In regard to conspiracy mentalities, there was no relationship between
experiencing SH and justice perceptions. Participants did not develop hostile or
threatening views of males if they experienced SH, nor did it develop higher
levels of conspiracy mentalities. Furthermore, there was no interaction where
conspiracy mentalities moderated the relationship between sexual harassment
conclusions, sex of the investigator, or justice perceptions. Again, there was a
significant relationship when just accounting for the decision of the investigator,
but it did not play a role, nor was it influenced by, conspiracy mentalities.

**Theoretical Implications**

The literature review for this thesis provides a strong rationale for the
hypotheses that were proposed. Since social identity (ingroup/outgroup)
dynamics did not influence participants’ perceptions of fairness, SH may serve as
a contextual factor that reduces the potency of ingroup or outgroup dynamics.

The scope of this paper was to determine if group identity had a role in
influencing justice perceptions of sexual harassment scenarios. This project had
significant contributions to the theoretical framework of SH, as researchers have
strongly suggested that group identity (e.g., feminism) has not been examined in
conjunction with SH perceptions (Bhattacharya & Stockdale, 2016). None of the
hypotheses in this study were significant, indicating that people are not swayed merely by the groups that they are a part of.

By all accounts and purposes, people should be more inclined to rally behind their groups when they face debasement, threat, humiliation, and exposure (Tajfel & Turner, 2004). In the current study, this simply was not the case. Participants’ justice perceptions were far more influenced by the conclusion than they were of the gender of the investigator. In all four of the different scenarios participants read, they had the same level of gender identity regardless of whether they read a scenario where a female investigator confirmed the SH grievance ($M = 5.45$), a female investigator denied the SH grievance ($M = 5.29$), a male investigator confirmed the SH grievance ($M = 5.38$) or a male investigator denied the SH grievance ($M = 5.51$). With the same levels of gender identity, it would be expected that there would be differences when outgroup members were jeopardizing the ingroup’s security.

Researchers have long established that women are the primary targets of SH (McDonald, 2012; Rudman, Borgida, & Robertson, 1995). These experiences have determined that women should be more sensitive to SH than men are, especially when the behavior is an obvious example of sexual harassment, instead of a vague or ambiguous one (Rotundo, Nguyen, & Sacket, 2001). However, consistent with Bhattacharya and Stockdale’s (2016) findings, being a part of a “feminist” group does not correlate with SH perceptions. These researchers had participants in one of two scenarios, where one accuser of SH was named Alicia and the other was named Amber. Both scenarios had two
versions that would be shared: one section had strong evidence for the claim; the other had weak evidence for the claim. One of the surprising elements of their results was that evidence mattered more to feminists than it did to nonfeminists and men.

This finding is extremely important, as it pertains to those who believe that people who are members of a particular group cannot be objective about the circumstances. In other words, if people believe that women cannot be objective when it comes to evaluating SH, the current study, in conjunction with Bhattacharya and Stockdale (2016), suggests that women are indeed objective. Additionally, they will not merely be inclined to agree with members of their ingroup, but they will evaluate the decision that is made in the context of the evidence provided. Consequently, people may not be as inclined to merely embrace their ingroup while disregarding the views of outgroup members. Female investigators who said no to the grievance were perceived just as low as male investigators who said no to the grievance.

Furthermore, this study attempted to determine if conspiracy mentalities (Cichocka et al., 2016) had a similar effect on women as it did for other minorities. When people are recipients of poor treatment from powerful outgroup members, this construct argues that people will develop justifiable beliefs that these outgroup members intentionally act to sabotage, debase, humiliate, and/or harm members of their disadvantaged group. While this construct has been demonstrated and validated on other minorities, women, according to the present
study, do not develop these mentalities towards men, even after being recipients of SH.

**Practical Implications**

Elkins et al. (2008) suggested that, upon reaching the conclusions of their research, that it would be best for investigators of SH to have the same gender as the accuser of SH. However, results from this study indicate that having the gender be the same as the accuser will not impact justice perceptions. Rather, the conclusion in and of itself was the only thing that influenced justice perceptions.

With the sexual grievances that are reported, it is important to remember that one of the major reasons women do not report their grievance is because they do not feel it will make a difference, that they will be heard, or that they will be believed (Gutek & Koss, 1993; Rudman et al., 1995). When organizations can gather evidence to support and substantiate their claims, workers will be more willing to accept the outcome. Ways that we can go about helping develop and implement fair processes in evaluating SH claims is giving survivors a voice (Gilson, Fedor, & Roth, 2005) and not dismissing survivors when they file SH claims. The qualitative analysis revealed several participants who vocalized this same concern, further contributing to the fact that women perceive that other women (or they, themselves) cannot voice these grievances because of these same reasons.

Unfortunately, however, even this guideline does not come without its complications. Ferguson and Malouff (2016) conducted a meta-analysis
assessing sexual assault reports to analyze and interpret the rate at which false reports are made. Understanding these false reports is an important topic because reputations are ruined, individual livelihoods are destroyed, and resources are wasted. Articulated by Ferguson and Malouff (2016), “the perception that people do not lie about being sexually victimized is… challenging” (p. 1185). Furthermore, the authors do not suggest we be skeptical of those reporting it, as that perception is just as challenging. The conclusion of Ferguson and Malouff (2016) was not encouraging. Both views (sexual assault charges are real or sexual assault charges should be viewed with an eye of skepticism) have evidence supporting their claim. Therefore, making a decision about which side to take based off of the evidence is a difficult conclusion to draw. Taking each scenario case-by-case without any preconceived notions, stereotypes, or biases is crucial. One of the ways organizations can prevent those issues from developing is taking enough effort when investigating and using strong evidence to support the claims.

As mentioned in definitions of SH, it is a subjective process where the recipient perceives stress (Schneider et al., 1997). Understanding cognitive and perceptual processes of workers, students, or any other kind of participant, will better prepare organizations and help them predict what may happen in the presence of SH. Whether we are dealing with increased absenteeism, turnover intentions, burnout, psychological trauma, body-related consequences, substance abuse, or decreased relationship satisfaction, morale, organizational commitment, job satisfaction, SH is not only a personal or organizational
concern, but a societal one. Understanding how people cognitively process, respond, and cope to SH has ramifications that go beyond psychological processes or organizational outcomes.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There were several features that, in hindsight, should have been considered and/or controlled for in this study. These include elements such as controlling whether or not participants were students or working women, using both men and women instead of just female participants, incorporating a more diversified sample in terms of ethnicity, the detail of the procedures in the scenarios, and identification with the survivor of the scenario.

While participants were recruited specifically through university settings, participants who were recruited through social media could very well have been students. There is no way of knowing exactly and we can only speculate whether participants from social media were students or working women (perhaps both). When examining whether or not participants thought a certain behavior constituted sexual harassment, Terpstra and Baker (2001) had male and female students (143 males and 100 females), as well as 48 working women, read a series of sexually harassing behavior and determine whether or not they thought that behavior was harassing. They found significant differences between the perceptions of students and working women where working women had more severe ratings of perceptions, indicating less tolerance and higher levels of sensitivity to SH. Without knowing what demographics each of our participants fell under, there could be higher levels of severity to working women over
students. Future researchers need to control for this variable, as participants from student populations may not view these situations as seriously or severely.

Second, the rise of SH among men has increased by 15.3% (Quick & McFadyen, 2017). The research on sexual harassment has been overwhelmingly demonstrated and focused on female survivors, with men predominantly being the perpetrators. While it remains unclear if men are actually being harassed more or if they are just becoming more open to expressing their grievances, males’ perception of SH ought to be examined closer. Past research has suggested that men view SH less severely than women (Baugh & Page, 1998; Bitton & Shaul, 2013; Hendrix, Rueb, & Steel, 1998). Our study intentionally used exclusively female participants, but with the rise of men reporting their grievances (Quick & McFadyen, 2017), abandoning stereotypes of masculinity (Heath et al., 2017; Vogel & Heath, 2016), and with women’s presence in the workforce increasing, understanding the dynamic of men in SH situations and perceptions is important. We know there are differences in SH perceptions between men and women, but is that dynamic changing? Furthermore, there is evidence that indicates men and women do not experience SH the same way (Gerrity, 2000; Roscoe, Goodman, Repp, & Rose, 1987; Stockdale, Visio, & Batra, 1999), which raises a strong need to understand not only the dynamic of SH with females, but also for males. Would men perhaps respond differently to ingroup and outgroup dynamics? Future research needs to include male participants.

Third, the overwhelming majority of this sample was predominantly White. Researchers have done important work and demonstrated, for instance, that
Mexican-American populations will have higher tolerance and less severity judgements of sexual harassment than White-Americans, especially among men (Kearney & Rochlen, 2012). Due to cultural influences (e.g., machismo culture), might these perceptions of SH differ across a multitude or races and ethnicities? Understanding the impact of culture on psychological processes can further or knowledge, understanding, occurrence, and prevalence of SH in the workplace.

Fourth, the nature of the scenarios in this study were deliberately vague. Participants did not like the conclusion of the investigators when SH was denied because there was not enough evidence or effort for them to reach that decision. While this is a limitation of the study, provided insight by showing that women were not merely using heuristic judgement and ingroup identity to formulate their justice decisions, but they wanted more evidence. By providing more information into the study, like Elkins et al. (2008), perhaps responses to the denial of SH will prove to have higher levels of justice? Or is the attempt to seek more information, effort, and/or evidence an illustration of cognitive dissonance? Rudman et al. (1995) have already argued that procedural components are more influential on perceptions of justice than distributive ones. This experiment could be replicated (and enhanced) by including specifics steps and information that investigators could use to include in their justice perceptions (e.g., witnesses they interviewed, examination of past allegations made, letting the survivor tell their story, whether the survivor works in a male/female dominated workforce, etc.). Considering that over half of the participants who were in a scenario where investigators denied SH believed there was not enough effort or evidence in the case, it is logical to
conclude that, with the proper effort and evidence, participants will feel that situations and scenarios are more just.

Finally, evidence was collected to determine participants’ overall level of identity with their gender. While this information was collected, information was not collected that would help assess their level of sympathy or identity with the survivor in the scenario that they read. People are a part of many different groups; simply because a female is proud of being a woman doesn’t mean she is sympathetic towards victims; perhaps they identify more strongly with groups that are not corporate, HR, other hierarchal positions, race, gender, and so forth. These organizational groups that people can be a part of create what researchers have called *faultlines*, or dividing lines that will categorize people into different groups (Bezrukova, Jehn, Zanutto, & Thatcher, 2009; Lau & Murninghan, 1998). In other words, people who are a part of a group will divide into subgroups within that group. It could be that participants had faultlines within their own organizations, where they are more likely to identify with “lower ranking” coworkers, as opposed to corporate managers and HR representatives. More information about participants hierarchical ranking, identification with survivors, and so forth should be collected in the future, as these ingroup dynamics may have been more influential than just being a woman.

On a specific venture for future research, *conspiracy mentalities* is a relatively unresearched construct. Significant work has been put forth by Cichocka et al. (2016) and argued well in regard to the treatment of African Americans, Jews, and other minorities. However, it was not well established in
regard to women formulating conspiracy mentalities because of men. And although this study produced a reliable scale for women’s conspiracy mentalities, future work should be put forth to better understand if women do formulate these kinds of views of powerful outgroup members (e.g., men). The construct itself may not be well applied to women as it is to other groups.

Future research could also examine cognitive dissonance, outcome bias, and SH. Do participants have PFC about handling SH? Do participants manifest cognitive dissonance when they encounter a scenario that they disagree with? Is the conclusion of the investigator going against their values and beliefs as it pertains to the treatment of women in the workforce? Many participants expressed statements like "ought" or "should" after investigators denied SH, suggesting that investigators ought or should have done more. Moral beliefs like these can spark the experience of cognitive dissonance, where the information they have encountered goes against their values and beliefs (Page, Pina, & Giner-Sorolla, 2015). Furthermore, people will naturally be inclined to want to behave in ways that are in harmony or in congruence with their previously held beliefs (Aronson, 1969; Cooper & Fazio, 1984; Harmon-Jones, Harmon-Jones, & Levy, 2015). With this information in mind, future research should account for previously held beliefs about SH. Perhaps preconceived notions, values, and beliefs about SH are superseding the influence of group identity on participants. Is cognitive dissonance going to be reduced when procedural information is included in the scenarios that participants read? Not only will this information provided theoretical insight into perceptions of justice and SH but will also help
organizations understand the importance of thoroughly investigating these grievances when they are reported.

As potential controls for future research, it would be beneficial to ask participants to what degree they feel women should be trusted in the grievances they report. If they do not believe that women feel they should be trusted, do participants possibly view victims of SH as partially responsible, thereby engaging in victim blaming? And might that dynamic influence perceptions of justice? Understanding this dynamic also calls for greater need to research men’s perceptions of justice, as it has already been documented by researchers that men are far more likely to blame survivors more than women (Pollard, 1992). Researchers have already researched *system justification theory* as a possible motivation for why people are inclined to blame the victim (Stahl, Eek, & Kazemi, 2010). Reasons for this type of behavior range from justifying male sexual aggression, defending the status quo (i.e., society offers a fair playing field for both genders), and overall hostility towards women. To what extent to men (or women) believe that women are responsible for the harassment and how does that dynamic influence perceptions of justice.

Another point of consideration pertains to what participants expected to happen. *Expectancy theory* is a motivational theory that argues people will pursue a particular action because of the expected outcomes (Vroom, 1964). Past research on *expectancy theory* have revealed that people’s expectations influence their responses to alcohol (Marlatt & Rohsenow, 1980), students’ motivation and performance in classrooms (Brophy, 2008), and occupational
choices of men and women (Brooks & Betz, 1990). Considering the research demonstrating why women do not report their grievances (e.g., they will not be taken seriously, people will not believe them, fear of retaliation, etc.), it would be worth knowing whether participants expected the alleged victim of SH to be believed or not. If women believed that the alleged victim was not going to be believed, but in fact was believed (i.e., the investigator decided that SH occurred), people’s expectations might have taken a surprise, thereby leading to higher levels of procedural and distributive justice.

A final note of consideration stems from more philosophical disputes than scientific ones. As it pertains to justice, does getting desirable outcomes necessarily mean that justice has been served? Is justice more than perception? After all, powerful and dominant groups oftentimes do things to other weaker and disadvantaged groups. From the dominator’s perception, they are getting what they want and they probably feel that justice is being done because it serves their interests or it is perceived as favorable. Just because participants agree (or disagree) with an outcome, it does not necessarily follow that they are perceiving actual justice. Consider the following statement, “If I am to perceive justice, then I need to like the outcome. I like the outcome, so I perceive justice.” This type of argumentation is called **affirming the consequent** and it is, by its very nature, an incorrect form of logic. Just because an individual likes an outcome, that does not mean they are on justice’s side.

It would be truly insightful to ask participants why they think that something is right or wrong. In a TEDx Talk (2015), Shreena makes a claim
about rape arguing that you can think rape is wrong for the wrong reasons and, consequently, contributing to the problem. Why do people think that SH is wrong? Why do they think that investigators and other third parties or correct or incorrect when they make a decision? Again, these types of questions are more philosophical, but psychological science could gain greater understanding as to why people think SH wrong or not, use that information to determine stronger rationale to combat SH, and, hopefully, come up with greater cognitive processes that will decrease tolerance, increase awareness, and reduce the occurrence of SH in personal, organizational, and societal settings.

**Conclusion**

Group identity is a powerful force that pulls us to defend our ingroup members, increase our group’s security, and enhance our group’s reputation. However, as it pertains to the abhorrent act of SH, truth, outcome, and justice may be more powerful influencers on our justice perceptions than ingroup or social identity. While the exceptional work of researchers, organizations, academics, and survivors has helped us gain greater insight and knowledge into the complexities and ugly realities of this phenomenon, much work still needs to be done to help us understand how we should conduct ourselves, our investigations, and our responses to people who are survivors of SH.
APPENDIX A

A FEMALE INVESTIGATOR WHO SAYS YES
A corporate Human Resources (HR) representative receives a phone call from an employee named Rachel, who alleges that she has been victimized and been a recipient of sexual harassment by her manager. Rachel relays the following information to the HR rep:

“I been working for this organization for almost a year and wanted to ask Steven for a raise. Ever since I asked, he has been acting weird and different around me. When I try to walk past him, he will often stand in my way or get really close to me. Additionally, he tells me what a good worker I am, while patting my back and rubbing my shoulders. It makes me extremely uncomfortable and sometimes I do not want to come into work. The other day, he asked me to come into his office to talk about the raise that I asked for. He told me that it wasn’t quite time for me to receive a raise, but if I went out on a date with him, he would pull a few strings and get me my raise anyway.”

Without further discussion, the corporate HR rep immediately contacts the HR rep of the branch that Rachel works in. Martha, that branch’s HR rep, is told that she needs to investigate Rachel’s claim to discover if Steven has been behaving the way that he has been accused of behaving.

After Martha completes her investigation, she considers all the information and concludes that Steven has committed sexual harassment. After reporting her findings to the corporate HR rep, it was determined that Rachel would be contacted that afternoon to be notified of their findings.
APPENDIX B

A FEMALE INVESTIGATOR WHO SAYS NO
A corporate Human Resources (HR) representative receives a phone call from an employee named Rachel, who alleges that she has been victimized and been a recipient of sexual harassment by her manager. Rachel relays the following information to the HR rep:

"I been working for this organization for almost a year and wanted to ask Steven for a raise. Ever since I asked, he has been acting weird and different around me. When I try to walk past him, he will often stand in my way or get really close to me. Additionally, he tells me what a good worker I am, while patting my back and rubbing my shoulders. It makes me extremely uncomfortable and sometimes I do not want to come into work. The other day, he asked me to come into his office to talk about the raise that I asked for. He told me that it wasn’t quite time for me to receive a raise, but if I went out on a date with him, he would pull a few strings and get me my raise anyway."

Without further discussion, the corporate HR rep immediately contacts the HR rep of the branch that Rachel works in. Martha, that branch’s HR rep, is told that she needs to investigate Rachel’s claim to discover if Steven has been behaving the way that he has been accused of behaving.

After Martha completes her investigation, she considers all the information and concludes that Steven had not committed sexual harassment, and that he is innocent of the allegations Rachel made against him. After reporting her findings to the corporate HR rep, it was determined that Rachel would be contacted that afternoon to be notified of their findings.
APPENDIX C

A MALE INVESTIGATOR WHO SAYS YES
A corporate Human Resources (HR) representative receives a phone call from an employee named Rachel, who alleges that she has been victimized and been a recipient of sexual harassment by her manager. Rachel relays the following information to the HR rep:

"I been working for this organization for almost a year and wanted to ask Steven for a raise. Ever since I asked, he has been acting weird and different around me. When I try to walk past him, he will often stand in my way or get really close to me. Additionally, he tells me what a good worker I am, while patting my back and rubbing my shoulders. It makes me extremely uncomfortable and sometimes I do not want to come into work. The other day, he asked me to come into his office to talk about the raise that I asked for. He told me that it wasn’t quite time for me to receive a raise, but if I went out on a date with him, he would pull a few strings and get me my raise anyway."

Without further discussion, the corporate HR rep immediately contacts the HR rep of the branch that Rachel works in. Peter, that branch’s HR rep, is told that he needs to investigate Rachel’s claim to discover if Steven has been behaving the way that he has been accused of behaving.

After Peter completes his investigation, he considers all the information and concludes that Steven has committed sexual harassment. After reporting his findings to the corporate HR rep, it was determined that Rachel would be contacted that afternoon to be notified of their findings.
APPENDIX D

A MALE INVESTIGATOR WHO SAYS NO
A corporate Human Resources (HR) representative receives a phone call from an employee named Rachel, who alleges that she has been victimized and been a recipient of sexual harassment by her manager. Rachel relays the following information to the HR rep:

"I been working for this organization for almost a year and wanted to ask Steven for a raise. Ever since I asked, he has been acting weird and different around me. When I try to walk past him, he will often stand in my way or get really close to me. Additionally, he tells me what a good worker I am, while patting my back and rubbing my shoulders. It makes me extremely uncomfortable and sometimes I do not want to come into work. The other day, he asked me to come into his office to talk about the raise that I asked for. He told me that it wasn’t quite time for me to receive a raise, but if I went out on a date with him, he would pull a few strings and get me my raise anyway."

Without further discussion, the corporate HR rep immediately contacts the HR rep of the branch that Rachel works in. Peter, that branch’s HR rep, is told that he needs to investigate Rachel’s claim to discover if Steven has been behaving the way that he has been accused of behaving.

After Peter completes his investigation, he considers all the information and concludes that Steven has not committed sexual harassment and that he is innocent of all the allegations that Rachel made against him. After reporting his findings to the corporate HR rep, it was determined that Rachel would be contacted that afternoon to be notified of their findings.
What is your gender?
1. Male
2. Female
3. Other (please specify): ____________________

Age: ___________ years

Ethnicity:
1. Asian
2. African American
3. White/Caucasian
4. Middle Eastern
5. American Indian
6. Hispanic/Latino
7. Other (please specify): ____________________

Work experience: _____________ years of work experience

Education Level:
1. Less than High School
2. High School Diploma
3. Some College
4. Associates or Vocational Degree
5. Bachelor’s Degree
6. Master’s Degree (MA/MS)
7. Professional Degree (MD, JD)
8. Doctorate Degree (PhD, EdD)

Have you ever been a recipient of sexual harassment?
1. Yes
2. No
3. Not sure

If yes, how many times (please specify number of instances)?
________________

How would you describe your family’s financial situation when you were growing up (0-16 years old):
1. Very poor, not enough to get by
2. Barely enough to get by
3. Had enough to get by, but not many “extras”
4. Had more than enough to get by
5. Well to do
6. Extremely well to do
APPENDIX F

POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE AFFECT SCHEDULE (PANAS)
(Walker et al., 1988)

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and indicate to what extent you generally felt this way in the last 6 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slightly or Not at</td>
<td>A Little</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Quite a Bit</td>
<td>Very Much</td>
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<td></td>
<td>all</td>
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</table>

1. Interested (P)  
   4 5

2. Distressed (N)  
   4 5

3. Excited (P)  
   4 5

4. Upset (N)  
   4 5

5. Strong (P)  
   4 5

6. Guilty (N)  
   4 5

7. Scared (N)  
   4 5

8. Hostile (N)  
   4 5

9. Enthusiastic (P)  
   4 5

10. Proud (P)  
    4 5

11. Irritable (N)  
    4 5
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Alert (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ashamed (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Inspired (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Nervous (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Determined (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Attentive (P)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Jittery (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Active (P)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Afraid (N)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX G

GENDER IDENTIFICATION SCALE (GIS)
Using the scale below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements below on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. I have a lot in common with other women.  
2. I often think about the fact that I am a woman.  
3. In general, I'm glad to be a woman.  
4. The fact that I am a woman rarely enters my mind (R).  
5. Generally, I feel good when I think about myself as a woman.  
6. I feel strong ties to other women.  
7. I often regret that I am a woman (R).  
8. Overall, being a woman has very little to do with how I feel about myself (R).  
9. I don’t feel good about being a woman (R).  
10. I find it difficult to form a bond with other women (R).  
11. In general, being a woman is an important part of my self-image.  
12. I don’t feel a sense of being “connected” with other women (R).
APPENDIX H

GENDER CONSPIRACY MENTALITY SCALE (GCMS)
(Bilewicz et al., 2013)

Using the scale below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements below on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Men are responsible for the mistreatment of women. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. Men abuse women’s feelings of guilt. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. Talking about men’s treatment of women irritates me. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. Women want to receive reparations from men from what they have done to them (R). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. Women spread the stereotype of men’s mistreatment of women (R). 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. Men feel that women over-exaggerate their experiences. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. Men like to dominate women. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. Men achieve their collective goals by secret agreements. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. Men don’t believe that women’s sexual harassment complaints should be taken seriously. 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
APPENDIX I

PROCEDURAL JUSTICE SCALE (PJS)
(Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt & Rodell, 2015)

Using the scale below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements below on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
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<th>4</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you feel the investigator applied procedures consistently?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Were the investigator’s procedures free of bias?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Were the investigator’s procedures based on accurate information?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Did the investigator uphold ethical and moral standards?  
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
APPENDIX J

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE SCALE (DJS)
(Elkins et al., 2008)

Using the scale below, please rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements below on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Disagree</td>
<td>Neither Agree or Disagree</td>
<td>Mildly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In my opinion, the investigator’s decision in this scenario was fair.  
2. Overall, I am satisfied with the investigator’s decision in this scenario.  
3. I feel that the investigator’s decision regarding whether sexual harassment occurred was fair.  
4. Overall, I feel that the investigator’s decision in this scenario was unfair (R).  
5. I am dissatisfied with the investigator’s decision regarding whether sexual harassment occurred in this scenario (R).
APPENDIX K

OVERALL FAIRNESS
Please answer the following question by selecting either “just” or “unjust.” Afterwards, briefly describe why you thought this investigation process was just or unjust.

1. Do you think that this process was fair or unfair?
   a. Fair.
   b. Unfair.

2. Why do you think that this process was fair/unfair?
APPENDIX L

EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS
Please answer the following questions by considering the prompt, as well as your perceptions on the scenarios that you have read.

1. Thinking about the information that you have received, what are your thoughts and reactions?

2. What are your thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and/or reactions to the decision of the investigator?
Informed Consent

**PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATORS:** You are invited to participate in a study being conducted by Devon C. Marrott and supervised by Dr. Ismael Diaz of the Psychology Department at California State University of San Bernardino.

**APPROVAL STATEMENT:** This study has been approved by the Department of Psychology Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee of the California State University, San Bernardino. The University requires that you give your consent before participating in this study.

**DESCRIPTION:** You will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which includes information about your gender, age, race/ethnicity, education level, socioeconomic status, and whether or not you have been a recipient of sexual harassment. You will then read a scenario, which consists of a female employee who vocalizes a sexual harassment grievance to her organizational leaders, after which the organization investigates. Upon reading the scenario, you will be asked a series of questions assessing your opinion of the scenario. This will take you no more than 30 minutes.

**RISKS AND BENEFITS:** The risks associated with participating in this study are minimal. However, it is dealing with content that may be perceived as distressing for some, which may trigger memories or negative feelings, as well. There is no direct benefit to you, but we will gain further depth and insight into how organizations can better handle situations involving sexual harassment. It also will provide stronger insight in to factors that may influence perceptions of justice in an organizational setting.

**COMPENSATION:** If you are a registered student at California State University, San Bernardino, you will be compensated by receiving credit through SONA for 30 minutes of work, which equates to 1 credit unit. If you are not a student at California State University, San Bernardino, you will not receive any compensation.

**PARTICIPATION:** Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time during the study. You are also free to skip any questions you feel uncomfortable answering.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** As no identifying information will be connected with your responses in this study, all of your responses are completely anonymous. Only the primary investigator and faculty supervisor will have access to the results of this study and these will only be reported as group data, not individual responses. The data will be evaluated, but no connection between your identity and the results will be made.

**RESULTS:** Access to all of your responses is limited to the investigators and faculty supervisor. If we publish the results of this study, we will report only aggregate (group) data; we will not report individual responses. The following groups may need to review study records, but the records will not be linked to your identity: Institutional oversight review offices at CSUSB and federal regulators. All data will be destroyed five years after publication.
OPPORTUNITY TO ASK QUESTIONS: Any questions regarding this study can be answered by contacting Professor Ismael Diaz (Ismael.diaz@csusb.edu or 909-537-5598). You may also contact the CSUSB Psychology department IRB Sub-Committee at psyc.irb@csusb.edu.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT: I have read the information above and agree to participate in your study. By selecting the option to continue, I affirm that I understand the above information and that I am taking part in this study voluntarily with the option to end my participation at any time with no penalty or negative consequence for voluntarily ending my participation. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

By clicking “Next” you are voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study.
APPENDIX N

NON SONA IRB APPROVAL
Informed Consent

PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATORS: You are invited to participate in a study being conducted by Devon C. Marrott and supervised by Dr. Ismael Diaz of the Psychology Department at California State University of San Bernardino.

APPROVAL STATEMENT: This study has been approved by the Department of Psychology Institutional Review Board Sub-Committee of the California State University, San Bernardino. The University requires that you give your consent before participating in this study.

DESCRIPTION: You will be asked to complete a questionnaire, which includes information about your gender, age, race/ethnicity, education level, socioeconomic status, and whether or not you have been a recipient of sexual harassment. You will then read a scenario, which consists of a female employee who vocalizes a sexual harassment grievance to her organizational leaders, after which the organization investigates. Upon reading the scenario, you will be asked a series of questions assessing your opinion of the scenario. This will take you no more than 30 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: The risks associated with participating in this study are minimal. However, it is dealing with content that may be perceived as distressing for some, which may trigger memories or negative feelings, as well. There is no direct benefit to you, but we will gain further depth and insight into how organizations can better handle situations involving sexual harassment. It also will provide stronger insight into factors that may influence perceptions of justice in an organizational setting.

COMPENSATION: In this study, there is no direct compensation to you. However, you have the opportunity to contribute to scientific exploration and theoretical development of social issues.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to withdraw your participation at any time during the study. You are also free to skip any questions you feel uncomfortable answering.

CONFIDENTIALITY: As no identifying information will be connected with your responses in this study, all of your responses are completely anonymous. Only the primary investigator and faculty supervisor will have access to the results of this study and these will only be reported as group data, not individual responses. The data will be evaluated, but no connection between your identity and the results will be made.

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The importance of masculinity ideology, gender-related traits, and reference...

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