Predicting the Decision to Report Sexual Harassment: Organizational Influences and the Theory of Planned Behavior

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Research suggests that only a small percentage of sexual harassment targets report their experiences to a superior or file a formal complaint. This conceptual paper integrates organizational factors gleaned from the sexual harassment literature, with the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991) to predict the decision to report workplace sexual harassment. I propose that climate of tolerance of sexual harassment, organizational justice, leader trust, and coworker support influence the target's attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control regarding reporting, which in turn determines the formation of the intention to report. Intention and actual behavioral control then predict actual reporting behavior.

Sexual harassment is a serious problem in the workplace and a major social issue with pervasive negative effects (e.g. Richman et al., 1999). Workplace sexual harassment has been defined as "unwanted sex-related behavior at work that is appraised by the recipient as offensive, exceeding her resources, or threatening her well-being" (Fitzgerald, Swan, & Magley, 1997, p. 20). Research suggests that approximately half of all women and 10 to 20% of men are sexually harassed at work (Berdahl & Raver, 2011) yet the number of employees willing to report (i.e. file a formal complaint or inform organizational authorities) is very low (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2000; Berdahl & Raver, 2011; Gutek, 1985; Peirce, Rosen, & Hiller, 1997; United States Merit Systems Protection Board (USMSPB), 1988, 1994). As a result researchers have identified increasing reporting as a necessary goal of workplace sexual harassment interventions (e.g. Hertzog, Wright, & Beat, 2008).

Most research into the factors influencing the decision to report harassment to organizational authorities has primarily focused on individual attributes or situational determinants (e.g. Brooks & Perot, 1991; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Gruber & Bjorn, 1986; Gutek, 1985; Knapp, Faley, Ekeberg, & Dubois, 1997). Little research has examined organizational factors that influence reporting notwithstanding that organizational factors can be changed in order to increase reporting behaviors. This conceptual paper identifies several organizational factors, namely climate of tolerance of sexual harassment, organizational justice, leader trust, and coworker support, which may influence target reporting behaviors. I propose a model of the decision to report sexual harassment based on these organizational factors and the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1988, 1991), "one of the most frequently cited and influential models for the prediction of human social behavior" (Ajzen, 2011, p. 1113).

Even in jurisdictions where organizations are legally required to adopt reporting policies and procedures (e.g. Canada), workplaces may not be conducive to reporting. An improved understanding of how organizations can promote internal reporting will better equip them to address the problem of

workplace harassment and avoid the organizational, legal, and potential reputation costs associated with it. I begin with a brief look at the impact of workplace sexual harassment, turning then to consideration of the importance of reporting. Next the theory of planned behavior is summarized and a model of reporting sexual harassment integrating the theory is delineated. Finally, I discuss recommendations for future research and implications for practice.

THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

A commonly used typology of sexual harassment comprises three types: gender harassment, unwanted sexual attention, and sexual coercion (Fitzgerald et al., 1988; Fitzgerald, 1990). Studies have found gender harassment to be the most frequently occurring form of sexual harassment (e.g. Fitzgerald et al., 1988). It includes crude sexual comments or comments that demean the target's gender. Unwanted sexual attention encompasses such behaviors as unwanted touching and repeated requests for dates. Finally, sexual coercion represents demands for sexual favours that imply job-related consequences. This research typology is congruent with the legal definition of sexual harassment: gender harassment and unwanted sexual attention comprise hostile environment sexual harassment and sexual coercion constitutes quid pro quo sexual harassment (e.g. *Burlington Industries, Inc.* v. *Ellerth*, 1998; Fitzgerald, Hulin, & Drasgow, 1995).

Experiencing sexual harassment has been found to be detrimental to one's health and well-being. Studies have demonstrated relationships with such outcomes as physical health (e.g. Raver & Nishii, 2010), mental health (e.g. Bergman & Henning, 2008), psychological well-being (e.g. Hershcovis & Barling, 2010), distress (e.g. Chan, Lam, Chow, & Cheung, 2008), trauma-related symptoms (e.g. Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008), fear (e.g. Barling, Rogers, & Kelloway, 2001), problem drinking (e.g. Rospenda, Fujishiro, Shannon, & Richman, 2008), and life satisfaction (e.g. Lim & Cortina, 2005).

Research suggests that sexual harassment also has a significant impact on one's job-related attitudes and behaviors including job satisfaction (e.g. Lapierre, Spector, & Leck, 2005), commitment (e.g. Gettman & Gelfand, 2007), job performance (e.g. Kelly, Murphy, Craig, & Driscoll, 2005), team performance (e.g. Raver & Gelfand, 2005), work productivity (e.g. Fitzgerald, Drasgow, & Magley, 1999), work group effectiveness (e.g. Estrada & Berggren, 2009), work engagement (Cogin, 2009), cognitive distraction (Barling, Dekker, Loughlin, Kelloway, Fullagar, & Johnson, 1996), work withdrawal (e.g. Kath, Swody, Magley, Bunk, & Gallus, 2009), and job withdrawal (e.g. Sims, Drasgow, & Fitzgerald, 2005).

The negative effects of harassment have been found in longitudinal studies (e.g. Munson, Hulin, & Drasgow, 2000) and when overall job stress and negative affectivity have been statistically controlled (e.g. Glomb, Munson, Hulin, Bergman, & Drasgow, 1999). Studies also indicate that witnessing harassment can be a harmful experience. For instance, indirect exposure to workplace sexual harassment experienced by members of one's workgroup is associated with decreased job satisfaction and increased psychological distress (Glomb, Richman, Hulin, Drasgow, Schneider, & Fitzgerald, 1997). Resultant health costs, reduced productivity, absenteeism, and turnover are costly to organizations, not to mention the legal and reputational costs. Although little research has attempted to determine the financial costs of sexual harassment, one study estimated the annual cost of same-sex sexual harassment in the United States Army to be over $95,000,000 (Faley, Knapp, Kustis, Dubois, Young, & Polin, 2006).

REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Most targets of sexual harassment do not report their experiences or use established grievance procedures, and are more likely to respond in a passive manner such as ignoring the harassment or avoiding the harasser (Bingham & Scherer, 1993; Gruber & Bjorn, 1986; Hulin, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1996; Peirce et al., 1997; Riger 1991; Welsh, 1999). Although the exact reporting rates of targets of workplace sexual harassment are unknown, studies have revealed low rates of only 13% (Knapp et al., 1997) or 6% (USMSPB, 1994) of targets reporting their experiences. A more recent study found that less

than 25% of university employees that experienced sexual harassment told anyone about the incident(s) (formally or informally) (Menon et al., 2011).

There are several reasons why formal reports of sexual harassment are important to organizations, employees, as well as targets of sexual harassment. First, ensuing investigations and sanctions will serve as a deterrent from engaging in similar behavior. This is important given that there are a myriad of psychological and social factors contributing to the proclivity toward sexual harassment (Pryor, 1987; Pryor, Geidd, & Williams, 1995; Pryor, LaVite, & Stoller, 1993), hindering organizations' ability to prevent it and making its elimination unlikely (Gallivan Nelson, Halpert, & Cellar, 2007). For example, studies of sexual harassment experienced by United States federal government employees reveal that incidents rates have remained consistent over time despite efforts to address the problem (USMSPB, 2004). Further, research suggests that training and policies aimed at prevention are not effectual when perpetrators do not fear punishment (Williams, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1999). Increased reporting together with appropriate organizational responses will signal the likelihood of punishment to perpetrators.

Second, knowledge of harassment and the concomitant opportunity to address it enables the organization to reduce the risk of lawsuits and limit legal costs. Targets that are satisfied with how their employer responds to their complaints are less likely to seek redress externally (Neuser, 2005). Further, in many cases, lack of knowledge of the harassment does not protect an employer from legal liability. Employers may be liable where a target suffers negative job action as a result of sexual harassment, where the sexual harassment was carried out by a manager or supervisor, and where the target demonstrates that a reasonable organization would have been aware of the harassment given the circumstances (*Faragher* v. *City of Boca Raton*, 1998; *Burlington Industries, Inc.* v. *Ellerth*, 1998). The best protection against legal liability is, then, to encourage reporting and promptly address complaints (*Faragher* v. *City of Boca Raton*, 1998; *Burlington Industries, Inc.* v. *Ellerth*, 1998).

Finally, awareness of harassment and identification of targets will enable organizations to make efforts to minimize negative consequences, provide targets with needed support, and repair relationships with valued employees. Despite being the least exercised target response, research suggests that targets find active responses such as reporting to more effective in improving the situation than passive responses such as ignoring or avoiding the harasser (e.g. Firestone & Harris, 2003). Further, as both fear and justice have been found to mediate the effects of sexual harassment on health and well-being and job-related outcomes (Barling et al., 2001), proper steps taken by the organization following a formal complaint may alleviate the target's fear of future harassment and help restore justice perceptions, buffering some of the negative impact on the target.

THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR

The theory of planned behavior (TPB), alternatively referred to as the reasoned action approach (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010), is "designed to predict and explain human behavior in specific contexts" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). The foundation of the theory is that three types of beliefs lead to the formation of intentions, which in turn predict behavior (e.g. Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Behavioral beliefs, or beliefs about whether performing a particular behavior will lead to positive or negative consequences, lead to the formation of a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward performing the behavior. The second type of beliefs is normative beliefs. Descriptive normative beliefs are perceptions of whether referent others engage in the behavior, while injunctive normative beliefs are perceptions of whether others expect us to perform or not perform the behavior. Together these normative beliefs create a subjective norm, or perceived social pressure, regarding the behavior. Finally, control beliefs are beliefs about personal or environmental factors that can help or impede performing the behavior. They lead to perceived behavioral control over the behavior.

Attitude, perceived norm, and perceived behavioral control then contribute to behavioral intention, "a readiness to perform the behavior" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, p. 21). Intention to perform or not to perform the behavior predicts behavior but this relationship is moderated by actual (rather than

perceived) behavioral control, defined as "relevant skills and abilities as well as barriers to and facilitators of behavioral performance" (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010, p. 21).

TPB has been applied to a plethora of situations to predict intentions and behavior, such as driving under the influence (Chan, Wu, & Hung, 2010), engaging in unsafe work behavior (Fogarty & Shaw, 2010), watching online video advertising (Lee & Lee, 2011), completing a treatment for substance abuse (Zemore & Ajzen, 2014), donating organs (Hyde, Knowles, & White, 2013), and using public transportation (Heath & Gifford, 2002). The theory has been demonstrated to account for large amounts of variance in both intentions and actual behavior in a variety of different contexts (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

PREDICTING THE DECISION TO REPORT SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Previous research into predictors of reporting harassment has focused primarily on individual factors such as self-blame (e.g. Gutek, 1985), low self-esteem and life satisfaction (e.g. Gruber & Bjorn, 1986), holding traditional gender-role beliefs (e.g. Fitzgerald et al., 1988), socio-economic status of the target (e.g. Knapp et al., 1997), and age of the target (e.g. Brooks & Perot, 1991). Situational factors that contribute to reporting harassment such as severity of the harassment (e.g. Cortina & Wasti, 2005), duration of the harassment (Cochran, Frazier, & Olson, 1997), or status of the perpetrator (e.g. Gruber & Smith, 1995), have also been examined. Notwithstanding the importance of these influences, it is imperative that we identify factors within the purview of organizational control that impact reporting, as well as explain how they do so.

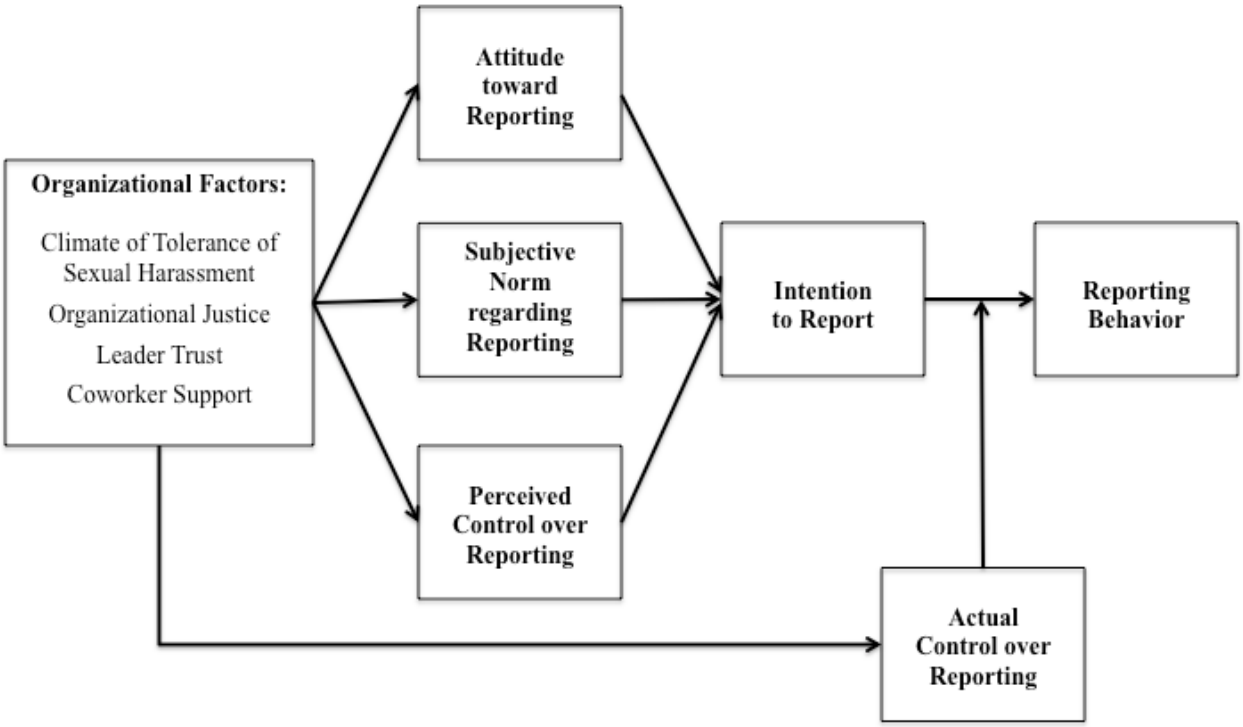
TPB explains how our beliefs about a behavior ultimately determine whether we engage in that behavior. The theory does not explain the origin of these beliefs other than to predict that there are numerous background factors that will influence the salience and evaluation of the beliefs (e.g. Ajzen, 2011; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Below I discuss several organizational factors that are proposed to contribute to a target's beliefs about reporting sexual harassment and delineate how these factors and TPB can predict reporting behavior. These proposed relationships are summarized visually in Figure 1.

Behavioral Beliefs and Attitude Toward Reporting

According to TPB, an individual's attitude toward a behavior develops from beliefs held about that behavior (Ajzen, 1991). "[E]ach belief links the behavior to a certain outcome, or to some other attribute such as the cost incurred by performing the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 191). Consistent with Fishbein's (1963) expectancy-value model, the likely outcomes of a behavior are weighted by the individual's evaluations of those outcomes, or how desirable or undesirable the individual deems the outcome to be. When deciding whether to report sexual harassment, the target's attitude toward reporting will be determined by whether he believes positive or negative outcomes are likely to result from reporting and his evaluation of those likely outcomes. While individual and situational factors will likely determine how desirable a target will deem a given outcome to be, the target's beliefs about the outcomes that are likely to result from reporting will be significantly influenced by several organizational factors: climate of tolerance of sexual harassment, organizational justice, leader trust, and coworker support.

Organizational climate of tolerance of sexual harassment (climate of tolerance) refers to employees' perceptions of the organization's tolerance of sexual harassment as evidenced through the organization's policies, procedures, and practices as well as the behaviors of organizational leaders (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Hulin et al., 1996; Williams et al., 1999; Willness, Steele, & Lee, 2007). Sexual harassment policies are formal written statements prohibiting harassment whereas procedures are the steps for reporting harassment, investigating complaints, and enforcing sanctions (Gutek, 1997; Williams et al., 1999). Practices represent the formal and informal actions actually carried out by the organization and include implementation practices related to policies and procedures, education or training, and provision of resources for targets (Williams et al., 1999). As it is organizational leaders who implement policies and procedures, formally and informally, climate of tolerance also comprises leadership behaviors regarding sexual harassment.

FIGURE 1
THE DECISION TO REPORT SEXUAL HARASSMENT BASED ON THE THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR (AJZEN, 1991)



Research suggests that tolerant climates inhibit reporting and intolerant climates encourage reporting (Gruber & Smith, 1995; Perry, Kulik, & Schmidtke, 1997). Specifically, targets working in organizations with multiple policies or procedures regarding sexual harassment are more likely to report than those working in organizations with only one policy or no policy (Gruber & Smith, 1995). Subordinates who perceive that their leaders make honest efforts to stop harassment feel significantly freer to report harassment than those viewing leaders as more harassment tolerant (Offerman & Malamut, 2002). Employees are also more likely to report sexual harassment when previous complainants are still employed by the company, prompt and thorough investigations are carried out, and when harassers and managers who allow harassment to continue are appropriately disciplined (Perry et al., 1997)

The climate of tolerance will influence whether the target forms beliefs that negative or positive consequences are likely to follow from reporting. The climate will send the target signals as to whether reports of sexual harassment are acted upon, lead to retaliation, or are simply ignored (Offerman & Malamut, 2002). "In tolerant climates, employees perceive weak contingencies between sexual harassment and sanctions and strong contingencies between complaints and backlash or career disruption" (Offerman & Malamut, 2002, p. 885). In intolerant climates, however, targets will perceive that reporting will lead to positive consequences, such as an end to the harassment, proper handling of the complaint, and provision of needed support.

The second factor that will influence target's beliefs about the likely outcomes of reporting sexual harassment is organizational justice, or individuals' perceptions of fairness in organizations (Greenberg, 1993). Studies suggest that justice perceptions may predict reporting (Butler & Chung-Yan, 2011; Rudman, Borgida, & Robertson, 1995). Perceptions of injustice may contribute to targets' concerns that they will be disbelieved or labelled as troublemakers (Fitzgerald et al., 1988) or that they will suffer

retaliation from the harasser or negative job consequences as a result of reporting (Peirce et al., 1997). On the other hand, targets that perceive that their organization is procedurally fair, for instance, will be more likely to believe that reporting harassment will result in positive outcomes, such as an end to the harassment, investigation of the complaint, and punishment of the harasser.

Trust is the "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party" (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995, p. 712). Lack of trust in leaders and their implementation of organizational policies and procedures may inhibit targets from reporting (Firestone & Harris, 2003; Handy, 2006). Research has found positive relationships between trust and upward communication (e.g., Gaines, 1980; Read, 1962; Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974), voice behaviors (Gao, Janssen, & Shi, 2011), and reporting threats of violence (Sulkowski, 2011). Perceptions of interpersonal trust promote risk-taking behaviors (Colquitt, Scott, & LePine, 2007; Mayer, et al., 1995; Rousseau, Sitkin, Burt, & Camerer, 1998) and there is an element of risk inherent in reporting sexual harassment. Employees who trust their managers are more likely to feel safe in reporting and have confidence in how management will respond to their complaint.

Finally, coworker support will influence a target's beliefs about the likely outcomes of reporting. Targets frequently state a reluctance to report due to fear of alienation or ostracism from coworkers (e.g. Handy, 2006; Peirce et al., 1997). Targets who perceive their coworkers are supportive will be less likely to fear such negative reactions from them. Further, supportive colleagues may actually encourage targets to complain. For instance, a recent meta-analysis indicates that coworker support is positively related to voice behavior (Chiaburu, Lorinkova, & Van Dyne, 2013).

Climate of tolerance, organizational justice, leader trust, and coworker support will determine whether a target of workplace sexual harassment believes that reporting the harassment would lead to positive or negative outcomes. These behavioral beliefs will then contribute to the target's favorable or unfavorable attitude toward reporting.

> *Proposition 1: Climate of tolerance of sexual harassment, perceptions of organizational justice, leader trust, and coworker support will influence the target's attitude toward reporting.*

Normative Beliefs and Subjective Norm regarding Reporting

Subjective norm, or perceived social pressure, is an individual's perception of whether referent others will approve or disapprove of the individual engaging in the behavior (injunctive normative beliefs) and whether referent others themselves perform the behavior (descriptive normative beliefs) (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). It is determined by normative beliefs and the individual's motivation to comply with those beliefs.

According to social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), people often look to referent others for cues as to how to behave. Halbesleben (2009) investigated the influence of a sexual harassment target's social cognition processes on reporting behavior and found that the social comparison process known as pluralistic ignorance played a role in explaining the discrepancy between the number of occurrences of sexual harassment and the number of reports. Pluralistic ignorance occurs when individuals mistakenly believe that others do not think or feel the same way that they do (Allport, 1924, 1933; Prentice & Miller, 1996). Halbesleben (2009) exposed undergraduate students to sexist jokes while manipulating their knowledge of the behavioral responses of others and demonstrated that participants were less likely to report their discomfort with the jokes when they perceived others did not share their discomfort.

In organizations that are tolerant of sexual harassment, "sexually harassing actions are commonplace, they become normative, and individuals are less likely to challenge them" (O'Leary-Kelly, Paetzold, & Griffin, 2000, p. 379; Riger, 1991). The target will perceive both that others accept the harassment and that they are supposed to accept the harassment. In an intolerant climate, however, there will likely be unequivocal communication and implementation of policies, adequate training, and leader behaviors that actively seek to prevent and punish sexual harassment. The target will be more

likely to view harassment as an atypical social interaction that violates organizational norms (Firestone & Harris, 2003; Fitzgerald & Shullman, 1993) and that she is expected to report the harassment.

While perceptions of organizational justice influence which outcomes are likely to result from reporting, as discussed above, they may also contribute to descriptive and injunctive normative beliefs. For example, targets that perceive that management treat them with politeness, dignity, and respect (interpersonal justice) (e.g. Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001), may assume this is the behavior expected of all organizational members, and that actions violating this organizational norm should be reported.

> *Proposition 2: Climate of tolerance of sexual harassment and perceptions of organizational justice will influence the target's subjective norm regarding reporting.*

Control Beliefs and Perceived Behavioral Control over Reporting

Perceived behavioral control "refers to people's perceptions of the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior of interest" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 183). It is comprised of self-efficacy (e.g. Bandura, 1997), or confidence in one's ability to perform a behavior, and controllability, or the extent to which performance of the behavior is within the person's control (Ajzen, 2002). It is important to note that perceived behavioral control is determined by beliefs over the control of the behavior itself and not the outcomes of the behavior. That is, we are concerned here with the target's perceived control over the act of reporting not over the outcomes that result from reporting.

Beliefs regarding the controllability of reporting will be influenced by whether the target possesses the information necessary to carry out reporting behavior (Ajzen, 2012) and has reasonable ease of access to the reporting mechanism. That is, the target must perceive that he knows the policy and procedure for reporting and that he is able to access the individual(s) to whom the report is to be made. Researchers have suggested that educating employees about reporting procedures may increase frequency of reporting (Brooks & Perot, 1991; Peirce et al., 1997). Targets in intolerant organizations will be more likely to be aware of, and have ease of access to reporting mechanisms. Further, if the report is to be made to an internal organizational authority, such as a member of management, leader trust will influence the target's belief that the complaint won't stop with that individual but that the formal reporting mechanism will be triggered. Finally, supportive coworkers may contribute to the target's self-efficacy beliefs regarding reporting by helping instil in the target the confidence needed to carry out the required actions. Social support has been identified as a possible element of perceived behavioral control (see, e.g., Ajzen, 2012).

> *Proposition 3: Climate of tolerance of sexual harassment, leader trust, and coworker support will influence the target's perceived behavioral control over reporting.*

Intention to Report and Reporting Behavior

According to the TPB, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control will each have an independent causal effect (see Fig. 1) on intention to engage in a behavior. That is, if the target develops a positive attitude toward reporting and a subjective norm supporting reporting, and perceives that she has behavioral control over the act of reporting, the target will form the intention to report the sexual harassment.

The intention to perform a given behavior is central to TPB (Ajzen, 1991). "Intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behavior; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior" (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181). Generally, intentions have substantial predictive validity and the stronger the intention to engage in a particular behavior, the more likely intention will lead to that behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

Proposition 4: Attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control will influence the intention to report.

Proposition 5: The intention to report will predict reporting behavior.

Actual Control over Reporting

According to TPB, actual behavioral control also influences behavior (Ajzen, 2002). "[G]iven a sufficient degree of *actual* control over the behavior, people are expected to carry out their intentions when the opportunity arises" (Ajzen, 2002, p. 665). Perceived behavioral control can often be used as a proxy for actual control (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010), however a person may believe that he is (not) able to carry out an action when in fact he cannot (can). Presumably self-efficacy would contribute to the difference between perceived and actual control.

Within the context of reporting, actual control over the act of reporting may strengthen the relationship between intention to report and actual reporting behavior. It is also likely that lack of actual control over reporting would weaken this relationship. A lack of behavioral control could arise from absence of a reporting mechanism or a dearth of lack of awareness of, or inaccessibility to, the reporting mechanism. For instance, Peirce and colleagues (1997) found that 40 percent of the targets in their sample did not report because they were unaware of their employer's policy or procedure for reporting sexual harassment. Such conditions, which are more likely to occur in a climate that is tolerant of sexual harassment, would impede the target's volitional control over reporting and inhibit reporting behavior.

Proposition 6: Climate of tolerance of sexual harassment will influence the target's actual behavioral control over reporting.

Proposition 7: Actual behavioral control will moderate the relationship between intention to report and reporting behavior.

DISCUSSION

In this paper I have developed a conceptual model to predict a sexual harassment target's decision to report harassment. As shown, climate of tolerance of sexual harassment, organizational justice, leader trust, and coworker support contribute to the target's attitude toward reporting, subjective norm regarding reporting, and perceived behavioral control over reporting. Attitude, norm, and perceived control then lead to the development of the intention to or not to report, which, in turn, predicts reporting behavior. Finally, actual behavioral control, influenced by climate of tolerance, moderates the relationship between the intention to report and reporting behavior. Empirical research is needed to test these propositions as well as investigate the relative importance of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control in predicting reporting.

Another fruitful avenue for future research would be to attempt to integrate individual and situational influences on reporting with these organizational factors. Individual and situational antecedents may be found to influence the strength of the various beliefs discussed above: attitude is partially determined by the desirability or undesirability of behavioral beliefs, subjective norm by the motivation to comply with normative beliefs, and perceived behavioral control by the power of the control beliefs (i.e. the extent to which the control factor can facilitate or impede performance) (e.g. Ajzen, 1991; Ajzen, 2002). For example, research has demonstrated that powerful individuals are less likely to conform to the opinions of others (e.g. Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008). Power, whether conceptualized as an individual or situational factor, may influence the target's motivation to comply with normative beliefs regarding reporting.

It would also be interesting to examine the role of labelling in the decision to report sexual harassment. Targets commonly report objectively defined sexual harassment experiences, as well as negative affective responses to those experiences, without labelling them as being sexual harassment

(e.g. Munson, Miner, & Hulin, 2001). Yet targets that label an incident as sexual harassment have been found to be twice as likely to report through official channels as those who do not (e.g. Harris & Firestone, 2010). Since studies have found that individuals who receive sexual harassment training are more likely to define ambiguous situations as harassment than those who do not receive training (e.g. Moyer & Nath, 1998), climate of tolerance may influence whether targets will label experiences as sexual harassment. Labeling, in turn, may increase the desirability of outcomes that involve management intervention and repercussions for the harasser, contributing to a positive attitude toward reporting.

Finally, future work in this area should examine whether this model applies to witnesses of sexual harassment as well as targets. Some researchers argue that observers are pivotal to ending workplace sexual harassment (e.g. Bowes-Sperry & O'Leary-Kelly, 2005). To date there is limited research examining witnesses willingness to report (Benavides Espinoza & Cunningham, 2010) and this model may be adapted to explain observer reporting behavior as observers of sexual harassment face similar concerns and fears as targets when deciding whether to report harassment they have witnessed (Bowes-Sperry & O'Leary-Kelly, 2005).

As a practical consideration, it should be noted that researchers have found that targets who report sexual harassment through organizational channels experience worse negative outcomes than those that do not report (Adams-Roy & Barling, 1998; Bergman, Langhout, Palmieri, Cortina & Fitzgerald, 2002; Stockdale, 1998). Research suggests, however, that the increased negative consequences result not from the act of reporting *per se* but from the organization's response to the report and the target's dissatisfaction with the response (Adams-Roy & Barling, 1998; Bergman et al., 2002). However, establishing a climate of intolerance of sexual harassment, creating perceptions of justice, building trust in leaders, and fostering coworker support, will not only increase reporting but also improve the perceived fairness and adequacy of ensuing procedures and practices.

The theory of planned behavior, or reasoned action approach, does not assume the decision maker is rational, nor does it preclude spontaneous decision-making (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). Experiencing sexual harassment often engenders strong emotional responses. Yet the decision to, or not to, report workplace sexual harassment, whether spontaneous or the result of a deliberative process, will derive from held beliefs, and these beliefs are influenced by organizational factors. If these organizational factors can be changed, then, ultimately, so too can reporting behavior.

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