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Coffee and controversy: How applied psychology can revitalize sexual harassment and racial discrimination training

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Abstract
Training has shown little effectiveness in altering harassing or discriminatory behavior. Limitations of prior intervention efforts may reflect poor conceptualization of the problems involved, poor training intervention design, approaches that engender cynicism, or misunderstanding psychological principles of attitude and behavior change. Interventions should capitalize on behavioral science models and tools at multiple levels from a broad array of disciplines to explain harassment and bias, and then to defeat these behaviors. Measures to ensure fair treatment should focus on leadership socialization, organizational culture and climate, increased professional competence, and integration with organizational approaches to corporate social responsibility and performance.

In late May 2018, over 175,000 employees in more than 8,000 Starbucks-owned coffee and tea stores within the United States received training following an incident in a Philadelphia Starbucks store in which two African American men were arrested for no apparent behaviorally based reason (Starbucks, 2018). Starbucks founder and executive chairman, Howard Schultz, said the training would take place because the company's founding values were based on "humanity and inclusion." According to the same press release, the training was "designed to address implicit bias, promote conscious inclusion, prevent discrimination and ensure everyone inside a Starbucks store feels safe and welcome" (Starbucks, 2018).

Behavioral science researchers and observers were unimpressed by this announcement. Jefferson and Lewis (2018) noted that while praiseworthy in intention, the Starbucks program was designed without a program evaluation component.[1] Chabris and Brown (2018) suggested a randomized control design to study the training treatment intervention as compared to making the training a universal Starbucks imperative within its corporate-owned, US-based stores.

[1]The entire training program is available at https://starbuckschannel.com/thethirdplace/.

Belluz's (2018) review of implicit bias training literature showed that training may not be a cure-all for Starbucks. Cumulated evidence has shown that implicit bias training has mixed results in reducing bias (Lai, Marini, et al., 2014), with "improvement" rarely lasting a week post-training. Furthermore, Forscher et al. (2019) showed that implicit bias training could lead to more bias, a finding consistent in both sexual harassment training (Blakely et al., 1998; Robb & Doverspike, 2001) and racial bias training (Hussey & De Houwer, unpublished manuscript).

This article summarizes eight practice topics and associated research questions for investigation and implementation from the scientist-practitioner perspective regarding how applied psychology could be useful to organizations seeking to mitigate or react to unlawful racial discrimination and sexual harassment. Contextual factors that could enhance the effectiveness of applied psychological interventions are discussed. Advances in training science and behavior change will be reviewed. Practice perspectives regarding applied psychological interventions will be reviewed at the individual and unit or organizational levels, to include organizational training commitment; increasing training impact; training content; training medium; organizational and individual behaviors along a continuum of harm; professional competence and beliefs about change; bystander programs; and incorporating corporate social responsibility and reputation management as part of an intervention strategy.

Unlawful racial discrimination and sexual harassment are well-publicized, cross-organizational problems that are possibly the most common and pernicious examples of counterproductive work behavior (Sackett, 2002). We emphasize that not all negative behavior exhibited toward individuals in identifiable or protected classes (i.e., women, Asian Americans, the LGBTQ community, faith communities, etc.) meets the legal definitions of discrimination or harassment, even if the behavior is provocative, and that these events must be dealt with within organizations themselves. The behavioral science databases for these issues are growing apace (e.g., Aksoy et al., 2018; Hebl et al., 2002; Lai, Haidt, & Nosek, 2014; U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 2014).

Importance

Unlawful racial discrimination

Fundamental to the nature of racism is the view that people can be sorted based on inherent and accidental characteristics such as ethnicity or regional origin, and that some groups are superior to others because of these between-group characteristics. Subjugation of the minority group by the majority group arises from this perceived superiority (Brewer, 1999; Leidner et al., 2010). Countries vary in the extent to which racial discrimination is legally prohibited in terms of contractual matters, business practices, education, and service provision. In the United States, for example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Pub. L. 88-352, 78 Stat. 241) prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin regarding interstate commerce, voting, education, and employment, the latter under Title VII (42 U.S. Code Section 2000e-2; the Act outlines narrow exceptions to all these prohibitions). Private and public organizations may have their own prohibitions in their codes of conduct or ethical standards.

The implications of racial bias can be assessed across a broad range of outcomes. At the individual employee level, a meta-analysis by Triana et al. (2015) regarding the impact of perceived racial bias on organizational outcomes found that perceived racial bias had consistent negative correlation with individual-level job attitudes (rho = –.38), perceived support for diverse employees (diversity climate; rho = –.32), psychological health (rho = –.14), and organizational citizenship behaviors (rho = –.14). McKay et al. (2007) found that diversity climate perceptions were a significant correlate of the individual's intent to quit the organization. At the organizational level, consequences of unlawful racial discrimination can range from legal action (e.g., the 1971 *Griggs v. Duke Power Company* decision; 401 U.S. 424) to social criticism and resultant public

contrition (e.g., the Starbucks training situation). At the federal government level, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC, n.d.) reported that the number of Civil Rights Act claims brought under Title VII, which would primarily affect employers, has increased for claims of violations based on employee color from fiscal year 2010 (n = 2,780 claims) to fiscal year 2018 (n = 3,166 claims), decreased for claims based on national origin from fiscal year 2010 (n = 11,304 claims) to fiscal year 2018 (n = 7,106 claims), and decreased for claims of violations based on race from fiscal year 2010 (n = 35,890 claims) to fiscal year 2018 (n = 24,600 claims).

In line with increased reports of violations of Title VII based on race, there have been a variety of social movements reflecting a rising public awareness of issues around unlawful racial discrimination. From the Starbucks incident to recent shootings of unarmed African American men, the need for effective race-based bias interventions at all levels of society is clear. Nearly one-third (32.2%) of all complaints filed with the EEOC in fiscal year 2018 were based on race (EEOC, n.d.). Organizations may be particularly motivated to address illegal race discrimination, as there are multiple direct and indirect costs associated with such accusations. Attrition due to race discrimination costs institutions millions in lost profits and opportunities, as well as increased time for recruitment and training (e.g., Kapor Center for Social Impact, 2017). Many organizations rely on their good reputation both for new employees and for sales figures, which can be diminished by having a reputation for condoning apparently racist behaviors (Goldman et al., 2006; Kapor Center for Social Impact, 2017; Sickler, 2018). Thus, there are short- and long-term consequences for not preventing and addressing unlawful racial discrimination in the workplace.

Sexual harassment

Although there are various forms of sexual discrimination, this article will focus specifically on sexual harassment in the workplace. Sexual harassment can involve intimidation or actions taken against a single individual based on gender characteristics. Sexual harassment does not require evidence that a practice, such as not promoting women, affects a certified class of affected individuals; this is covered in the United States by the Civil Rights Act. A classic formulation of sexual harassment (U.S. Code of Federal Regulation, Title 29) involves either a *quid pro quo* work arrangement (coercion to perform sexual acts in exchange for favorable organizational outcomes) or the existence of a hostile work environment that unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance. Johnson et al. (2018, p. 2) differentiate the hostile workplace concept into gender harassment (e.g., derogatory comments about a gender) or unwanted sexual attention. It is notable that while coercion involves volitional behavior targeting a particular person, creation of a hostile work environment might not target anyone in particular. Alternatively, the person engaging in actions deemed by others as harassing may not be aware that others find the behaviors harassing.

Statistics regarding the incidence of sexual harassment and assault are dependent upon reporting comfort and definitions of harassment. Defining sexual harassment only in terms of coercion will result in a lower incidence rate than defining harassment in terms of the more extensive concept of gender harassment. Where or when the harassment or assault occurs—in an educational setting, at work, in the military—also enters into consideration. For example, Anderson (2015; see also Burns et al., 2019) claimed that about 20% of women have been sexually assaulted based on studies of collegiate settings, but that the rates of unreported incidents are likely much higher. However, Fedina et al. (2018) reviewed studies of college campus assault from 2000 through 2015 and found wide variation in assault incidence based on how these incidents were categorized, for example, as physical contact or coercion to engage in unwelcomed behavior. A comprehensive RAND study of sexual harassment in the U.S. military (Jaycox et al., 2015, table 3.11) found that prior to joining the military, 8.17% of female respondents to its survey had experienced a sexual assault while 0.91% of male respondents had experienced a sexual assault, but since joining the military those proportions had risen to 14.69% of women and 2.1% of men. Jaycox et al. (2015,

table 3.13) also studied reporting rates. They found that 24% of all respondents who had experienced a sexual assault while in the military indicated that they had not reported the event as a means to minimize its impact (e.g., they thought it was not serious enough to report), while another 29% feared retaliation or thought reporting it would make the reporting service member look bad, etc. Analyses of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and quid pro quo prevalence were also included in the RAND study (Farris et al., 2015). In this analysis, 1.66% of female respondents and 0.35% of male respondents reported being the target of a quid pro quo attack (table 4.2); 21.57% of females and 6.61% of males reported experiencing sexual harassment (table 4.3); and 12.4% of females and 1.73% of males reported experiencing gender discrimination (table 4.4). At the federal government level, the EEOC (n.d.) reported that the number of Civil Rights Act harassment claims brought under Title VII, which would primarily affect employers, has varied in a small range over time from fiscal year 2010 (n = 7,944 claims) to fiscal year 2018 (n = 7,609 claims).[2]

Finally, psychologists at the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB; 2018a, 2018b) aggregated U.S. government employee survey data from 1994 and 2016 regarding 12 discrete behaviors indicative of sexual harassment.[3] These behaviors can be categorized into one of three dimensions: sexual coercion, unwanted sexual attention, and gender harassment. In 1994, MSPB estimated that 44.3% of female U.S. government employees and 19.1% of male U.S. government employees reported having experienced any of these behaviors; in 2016, those figures had dropped to 20.9% of women experiencing any of these behaviors and 8.7% of men having experienced any of these behaviors.

Recent societal trends, such as #MeToo and #TimesUp, show that interventions for workplace sexual harassment and assault are timely and needed. Harassment and discrimination are costly for organizations (e.g., litigation, blemished company reputation, etc.; Brown et al., 2018) and victims (e.g., higher turnover, decreased job satisfaction, and increased absenteeism, etc.; Bergman et al., 2002; Kaylor & Weaver, 2018; Offermann & Malamut, 2002) alike. According to the EEOC (n.d.), approximately $56.6 million in fines was awarded in fiscal year 2018 for cases that were not resolved before trial, a nominal 78.2% increase on a per-resolved-case (reasonable cause, successful conciliations, unsuccessful conciliations, merit resolutions) basis since fiscal year 2010. This illustrates the financial importance of preventing and addressing workplace sexual harassment and assault for organizations.

Revitalizing sexual harassment and racial discrimination training

Training is a natural starting point for applied psychologists in organizations seeking to address unlawful racial discrimination and sexual harassment. Science-based analysis supports an organization's investment in training while pointing to how an organization can enhance its own training investment. The question is whether training "works" effectively to address racial discrimination or sexual harassment behaviors.

What are the prerequisites for effective training?

Salas et al. (2012) published a systematic review of training research indicating five broad prerequisites of effective training programs: identifying workforce and organizational training needs, careful training content and program development, establishing leadership's support of training,

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[2]Meanwhile, the EEOC reported that the number of complaints received based on sexual orientation or identity (i.e., LGBTQ) harassment issues increased from about 808 in fiscal year 2013 to 1,811 in fiscal year 2018.

[3]MSPB increased this roster of discrete harassing behaviors from eight to 12 in its 2016 analysis (U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 2018a, 2018b).

integration of technology into training without overreliance on technology, and promotion of ongoing integration of training and on-the-job functions.

Campbell et al. (2018) summarized their integrative review of the training literature by stating that four key issues (pp. 534–536) must be addressed for training to be effective in improving or altering behavior: (1) development of a model of training design, implementation, and evaluation; (2) the nature of the aptitude by training treatment interaction, which is presumed to exist for any human attribute; (3) a definition of the outcomes to be altered by training and assessed in training evaluation; and (4) instructional system design that is built on known models of how people learn. Medeiros and Griffith (2019) elaborate on some of these topics and processes specifically within the context of training for sexual harassment and assault prevention. Campbell et al. (2018) concluded that training evaluation science shows that while training "does work" (p. 590) from the perspective of overall measurable changes in outcomes pre-/post-training, there are many caveats and cautionary boundary conditions on this overall conclusion. For example, Salas et al. (2012), after Arthur et al. (1998), noted that regardless of training program feature, training effects decay if the job does not afford the opportunity for practice. Lacerenza et al. (2017, tables 3 and 4), in a review of manager training literature, found that while management-oriented training "works," it is less effective when trainee participation is involuntary and when interpersonal, rather than intrapersonal or business skill, knowledge is trained.

Does anti-harassment or anti-racial discrimination training work?

Organizations that implement high performance work programs such as skills-oriented training may get return on investment by having better human resource practices overall (e.g., Huselid, 1995; Kim & Ployhart, 2014). Arthur et al. (2003) showed that training for interpersonal skills results in significant organizational outcomes (average d-prime of about .78), even though improvement in behavior for individual employees via transfer of training to the job is variable (average d-primes varying from .22 to .94; see also Lacerenza et al., 2017, on training outcome definitions). Arthur et al. (2003, p. 242) concluded that this variability shows that the "favorability of the posttraining environment play[s] an important role in facilitating the transfer of trained skills to the job." However, while harassment and discrimination might be signs of poor interpersonal skills, and while training might effectively improve skills in general, damage to the organization's reputation (and the well-being of employees) arises from the behavior of *individual employees* irrespective of the *organization's* liability protection from training.

One criterion of effective training (Campbell et al., 2018) is a definition of outcomes to be targeted through training. The criteria and concepts of typical antidiscrimination or antiharassment training may be ill-defined. Employees may be unaware of their tendencies to treat persons from minority communities unfairly, or that their attitudes toward people from distinct demographic backgrounds could be negative. Organizational decision-makers might harbor unconscious biases regarding individuals from identifiable subgroups or minority communities and thus potentially act negatively toward these individuals (e.g., Ghumman et al., 2016; Hebl et al., 2002; State of New South Wales, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Behavioral Insights Unit, 2016). Unconscious biases among organizational decision-makers might limit promotion or participation of minority individuals in leadership roles. In terms of attitudes and beliefs about training, employees may not know or believe, or have realized, that certain behaviors or attitudes are harmful or illegal. They may believe that what matters at work is task performance, that some people are simply more prone to feeling harassed, or that some people file false harassment or discrimination claims. Finally, employees may believe that efforts designed to defeat discrimination and harassment *a priori* assume all majority group/nonprotected members are perpetrators, leading to a defensive or defiant attitude before training. Without assessing and addressing these beliefs and behaviors,

training may focus on the wrong outcomes. For example, what would constitute "humanity and inclusion" as an outcome of Starbucks's training?

Sexual harassment training

Empirical reviews of the efficacy of sexual harassment training have found limited to no positive behavioral effect. Williams et al. (1999) studied the relative influences of harassment consequence policy, making resources available to raise awareness of sexual harassment, as well as sexual harassment training on incidence of sexual harassment in a military context. Only implementation of consequences by managers significantly curtailed incidence of experience of sexual harassment; there was no effect of training on reduction of harassment. Antecol and Cobb-Clark (2003) assessed attitudes about what constituted sexual harassment using federal employee survey data gathered in 1995 by MSPB (2018a, 2018b). Antecol and Cobb-Clark (2003, p. 838) found that when survey respondents reported having ever attended sexual harassment training, "[S]exual harassment training is associated with between a four and five percentage point higher probability that women employed in the federal government have a definition of sexual harassment that includes co-worker initiated, unwanted sexual gestures, sexual remarks, and pressure for dates," while men were more willing to label supervisor-initiated behaviors as harassing (unstated but presumably when directed toward women). However, 9.8% of women and 14% of men reported being more skeptical about the efficacy of sexual harassment training *after* being trained. Anderson and Whiston (2005) conducted a meta-analysis of university campus-based sexual assault prevention programs. These authors reported that assault-related attitudes and knowledge changed based on training, but there was little evidence of behavioral-related outcome changes such as decreases in sexual assault (a criterion few studies examined). Goldberg (2011) reported no effect of sexual harassment training on cognitive outcomes (i.e., understanding that someone has done something wrong), attitudinal outcomes (changed attitudes about sexual harassment being injurious or wrong), or skill-based outcomes (change in prevalence of engaging in sexual harassment), though harassed women were more likely after training to have the skill to confront perpetrators after some types of harassment.

Pina et al. (2009) concluded that there is a lack of program evaluation evidence regarding the efficacy of sexual harassment training programs. Pina et al. (2009, p. 134) noted that sexual harassment training might be irrelevant because "[T]hese programs do not address the essential issues that surround the occurrence of the phenomenon, such as sexism at work, power misuse and abuse, hierarchical issues, gendered environments, and individual perpetrator characteristics." (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009, provide an integrative review of these construct and process issues.) This sentiment was echoed and reinforced by DeGue et al. (2014) and by a systematic literature review from Marquis et al. (2017), who concluded that sexual harassment training has failed to meet criteria for effectiveness based on rigorous program evaluation standards. They concluded that the lack of effectiveness was likely due to the typical program's focus on changing attitudes and knowledge rather than focusing on changes in behavior at either the individual or organization level.

Unlawful racial discrimination training

Marquis et al. (2017, p. 25) adopted the framework proposed by Pager and Shepherd (2008) to distinguish among organizational phenomena reflecting behavior (discrimination), attitudes (prejudice), beliefs about groups (stereotypes), and "ideologies that support the status quo between groups." Marquis et al. (2017, p. 25) further noted that "[D]iscrimination can occur without prejudice, and prejudiced people do not always discriminate." Finally, Marquis et al. (2017, p. 25) clarified the distinction between implicit prejudice, which reflects justification mechanisms but not necessarily overt behavior, and explicit prejudice, which reflects overt behavior. These differentiations

do not include contextual or process factors. It is likely that interventions seeking to "train away" biases, such as that offered at Starbucks, blur these distinctions.

Organizational science and practice regarding racial, national origin, or ethnic group differences has taken a different path than work on gender, in part because of historical injustice (e.g., the violent legacies of slavery, colonialism, or ethnicity-oriented suspicion) and in part because industrial and organizational (I-O) psychology as a field has historically been more interested in selection-oriented issues than in the challenges minority individuals face in the workplace. Research regarding social perception and race-/national origin-/ethnicity-oriented bias assessment was taken on more quickly and fully by social psychologists. Meta-analyses have supported different perspectives on the efficacy of unlawful racial discrimination training from this social psychology tradition.

A meta-analysis by Forscher et al. (2019) assessed the quantitative results of interventions[4] designed to change implicit bias test scores. They found that implicit bias was reduced or eliminated when targeted interventions sought to weaken the associations between negative attributions and group membership. Interventions that instructed or motivated respondents to respond in a less-biased manner, what Forscher et al. termed "goals to weaken bias" such as making antiracism norms salient, also reduced implicit bias scores. The same approaches to reduce implicit bias also reduced explicit bias (responses to questions such as "How do you feel about Black people?") somewhat. Unfortunately, Forscher et al. (2019) reported that minimizing or eliminating implicit bias did not change explicit bias-related behaviors.

Systematic literature reviews arrive at conclusions consistent with Forscher et al. (2019). Paluck and Green (2009) reported on efforts to battle explicit bias, not implicit bias. While some explicit bias debiasing training such as cross-cultural training and peer learning was successful, according to Paluck and Green (2009), approaches such as diversity training or intergroup conflict management were lacking in empirical support mostly due to lack of a theoretical basis as to why they should work or result in changed behavior. Paluck et al. (2019) meta-analyzed recent studies of the "contact hypothesis," which stipulates that having people from differing racial/ethnic groups collaborate should reduce prejudice. Their review found significant moderating conditions—no studies with people over 25 years of age, smaller effects for larger studies—that gave cause for considerable doubt about this approach to debiasing. Other quantitative studies about bias point to features and limitations of debiasing interventions. Forscher et al. (2017) found that ethnic stereotyping could be countered by replacing biased opinions and habits with positive messages, thus creating a nonbiased habit of thinking about minority-group individuals.

Review of organizational diversity training intervention research

Several meta-analyses and systematic reviews have been published regarding diversity training interventions that might be used in organizations.

Systematic literature reviews

Kulik and Roberson (2008) noted that behavioral change was difficult to assess in diversity training because studies typically use self-report, and people are poor evaluators of their own behavior. Kulik and Roberson (2008, p. 314) concluded, "The research suggests that adult learners usually perceive themselves as having higher skills after diversity education, but there are few studies

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[4]P. Forscher and C. K. Lai (personal communication, May 20, 2018) noted that these interventions are not the type of training one would find in a corporate or educational setting. The interventions in their meta-analyses were lab-based and frequently involved inducing positive attributions toward minority-group individuals or negative attributions of majority-group individuals. Finally, they noted that interventions targeting bias against one group (e.g., African Americans) would not produce a "spill-over effect" such that bias against a different group, for example women, would also be reduced while bias reduction against a target group was desired.

examining objective skills, and those studies have produced inconsistent results." Curtis and Dreachslin (2008) also found lack of behavioral evidence. They noted (p. 121) that while training improves attitudes, "Evidence that training actually changes behavior in a significant way is lacking." Phillips et al. (2016) reviewed literature on training about disabilities in organizations and found only three publications; these authors reported a wide gap between practice and research on integrating those with differing levels of ability into the workplace. Alhejji et al. (2016) conducted a systematic literature review of diversity training theories, methods, and contexts, as well as outcome-oriented studies focused on learning, return on investment, and attitudes. They found a significant amount of variability in approaches to diversity training, leading them to conclude (p. 140) that available research was atheoretical and "methodologically flawed and fragmented."

Meta-analyses

Kalinoski et al. (2013) meta-analyzed studies using an outcome taxonomy of attitudinal outcomes, cognitive outcomes, and behavioral skill-based outcomes. While results indicated a robust result for the behavioral skill-based outcome category (sample-size weighted mean effect size = .47), there was no further fine-grained analysis of what behaviors had changed.

Bezrukova et al. (2016) included studies with program evaluation components in the study's intervention design in their meta-analysis. The goals of these studies included increasing awareness of minority racial/ethnic/national origin groups, knowledge of diversity principles, and training on appropriate/nondiscriminatory behaviors. Bezrukova et al.'s (2016) results show that training increased knowledge-based outcomes and positive reactions to training more, and for longer amounts of time, than did interventions targeting attitudes or stereotypes. Bezrukova et al. (2016) claimed that their results meant that diversity training improved trainee bias-related behavioral outcomes. However, their operationalization of behavioral outcomes (p. 1229 and p. 1233) mixed self-report of behavioral change, self-reported knowledge (e.g., measured by situational judgment tests; Hauenstein et al., 2010), and independent observer behavioral ratings. Thus, Bezrukova et al. (2016) showed that diversity training could have positive cognitive outcomes in terms of understanding other people and in terms of knowing the right behavior to perform, and that trainees would not reject diversity training out of hand; both their meta-analysis and the meta-analysis by Kalinoski et al. (2013) were not definitive in demonstrating that trainees acted differently toward minority group individuals post-training as opposed to, for example, knowing which behaviors were more appropriate.

Interventions in both lab and field settings to eliminate or weaken biased behaviors in organizations have been successful for short durations in improving attitudes toward target individuals, and in improving target trainee knowledge about bias and about less biased ways to act. A key moderator of the training or intervention was duration of training. Meta-analyses of interventions to address racial bias have found that longer training intervals (in Kalinoski et al., 2013, training that lasted more than 4 hours; Bezrukova et al., 2016, p. 1238, also reported greater amount of change with longer training intervals) are more effective for outcomes such as attitudes and cognitions. However, Lai et al. (2016) found that the change due to implicit bias interventions is short-lived, possibly lasting under 24 hours.

Knowledge of the impact of training duration on behavioral change is clouded by means of behavioral change measurement. Work by Forscher, Lai, and their colleagues (e.g., Forscher et al., 2019) suggests that wholesale attitude change is not a typical outcome of de-biasing training; that when de-biasing works, it is because one (positive) attribution or stereotype has been substituted for another; and that any effect even when training "works" may be fleeting.

We conclude that the diversity knowledge base and training meta-analysis literature shows that the lack of alignment between training content, goals, and effectiveness criteria has led to training that positively changes attitudes and knowledge, but not necessarily behavior.

How could applied psychology re-focus research agendas to help organizations seeking to mitigate discrimination and harassment?

Psychologically trained practitioners in organizations, including I-O psychologists, social psychologists, clinical psychologists, and consulting psychologists, are in positions to implement behavioral interventions designed to mitigate or eliminate unlawful racial discrimination and sexual harassment. Organizational goals and applied psychologist goals should be aligned for training to demonstrate effective outcomes. We introduce these approaches and propose key research questions.

Topic 1: Organizational training commitment

Training is the most obvious intervention option for addressing sexual harassment or unlawful racial discrimination: it is scalable from the work group to the organization, it is a face-valid process, and it is within the I-O and applied psychology skill set. We suggest that more attention is needed to align training goals, learning theory, and expectations.

Kath and Magley (2014, p. 323) conceptualized sexual harassment training as a form of organizational socialization rather than skill building. While socialization conveys expectations of organizational values and normative behavior, skill-oriented training creates an expectation of attainment of minimum proficiency. Kath and Magley noted that trainee motivation depends in part on wanting to apply what was learned in training on the job. Another concern is not being cynical about the rationale for training. If the rationale seems largely to focus on minimizing organizational liability, then trainees are likely to be unmotivated and disengaged. In contrast, meta-analysis has established the positive role of training motivation (Colquitt et al., 2000) in achieving organizational goals and behavior change. It seems possible that training to reduce harassing or biased behavior might be more effective if it is framed as under the individual's control (Colquitt et al., 2000, p. 694) or integrated into an effort to increase morale rather than as a mandatory condition of employment (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016; Holladay et al., 2003). For both sexual harassment and racial discrimination, training that has follow-ups or lasts longer should be more effective than short-duration training (Devine et al., 2012). Kath and Magley (2014) noted that as with any change-oriented initiative, ongoing executive commitment to a workplace free of harassment and discrimination, and organizational support for key nonharassment values are required for training to be effective.

> *Research Question #1:* Will unlawful racial discrimination or sexual harassment training oriented toward development (e.g., learning or mastering a new skill), as opposed to being oriented toward compliance, be effective in changing behavior?

Topic 2: Increasing training impact

An organizational climate that is intolerant of sexual harassment and assault can lead to lower levels of sexual misconduct (Bergman et al., 2002; Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Glomb et al., 1997, 1999; Wasti et al., 2000). Offerman and Malamut (2002) found that female service members who perceived that their supervisor made efforts to stop sexual harassment reported feeling significantly freer to report the misconduct and felt more satisfied with the reporting process compared to service members who felt their supervisor was tolerant of sexual harassment. When an organization expresses to its employees that sexual harassment is considered to be a serious matter, employees are more willing to report the sexual misconduct (Brubaker, 2009). Not only can this attitudinal change improve the climate of the workplace, it may also lead the organization to take reports of sexual misconduct more seriously (Bergman et al., 2002). This literature suggests that changes within the organizational climate and leadership response to these behaviors may

help to prevent sexual harassment and assault from occurring by increased reporting at earlier stages and improving how sexual misconduct reports are handled (Kaylor & Weaver, 2018).

Trainee receptivity may be distributed as power functions rather than normal distributions (e.g., O'Boyle & Aguinis, 2012). Bezrukova et al. (2016) reported uneven meta-analytic moderation based on whether training was mandatory or voluntary, with better results for behaviorally oriented outcomes in mandatory training but more favorable reactions to training in voluntary attendee conditions. Rather than have all employees regardless of enthusiasm attend the same training, typical organizational tools such as surveys or assessments can be used strategically to anticipate predisposition to escalation of violence or harassment behaviors among business units or individuals. Psychologists can use this form of insider threat practice to devise intervention strategies aligned with the training or remediation needs of individuals or areas prone to escalation. Similarly, there may be employees who are enthusiastic about antidiscrimination or harassment initiatives who could help design intervention programs or processes on a peer-to-peer basis (see Kulik et al., 2007).

> *Research Question #2:* How can interventions, such as efforts to build a climate of intolerance for harassment or surveys to anticipate predisposition to escalation, be engineered to increase both participation in and receptivity to necessary changes in behavior resulting from training?

Topic 3: Training content

The typical training model presumes that aside from their motivation, trainees know how to be trained and transfer the training to work. Adler et al. (2015) tested this presumption in a randomized study of mental skills training. Their study focused on creating "mental skills," which were specifically cognitive control (learning how to learn more effectively) and emotional regulation (including reduced anxiety and effective allocation of emotional resources; Adler et al., 2015, p. 1753), among soldiers in basic training. The goal was to establish the extent to which learning these skills led to improved training performance. Adler et al. found that soldiers in the mental skills conditions relative to those in a control condition were significantly better able to learn and eventually performed better in some basic training tasks through instilling better learning and transfer habits.

Social psychology research on resilience training and attitude change might also be relevant. Cialdini et al. (2006) found that training using injunctive norms ("don't do this") was more effective in stopping unwanted behavior than was training using descriptive norms ("this is what other people do"). Cacioppo et al. (2015) examined a training intervention for social resilience, defined by Cacioppo et al. (2011, p. 44) as "the capacity to foster, engage in, and sustain positive relationships, and to endure, recover from, and grow as a result of life stressors and social isolation." An ability to empathize with others also defines social resilience. Cacioppo et al. (2015) found that social resilience training was effective in creating empathy and perspective-taking. In summary, Cialdini et al.'s (2006) results show that sexual harassment or unlawful racial discrimination training should focus on what not to do—maybe along the lines of do n0t harass, bully, or otherwise discriminate against people—while Cacioppo et al.'s (2015) results suggest that additional training components could replace the negative behavior (bias, bullying, harassment) with positive target behavior (using social resilience to build empathy, perspective-taking, and community). The meta-analysis by Forscher et al. (2019) and further work by Lai (2019) demonstrate that changes in bias-related attitudes occur through substituting negative attitudes with positive ones. Models of sexual harassment and unlawful racial discrimination training generally focus on the trainee as the source of the behavior that should be mitigated. However, sexual harassment training has shown positive results for those who have been harassed (traditionally, women or racial minorities; O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009; Pina et al., 2009; Walton & Cohen, 2007).

Alternative training content might focus on training employees to intervene in a harassing or demeaning/biased setting as bystanders (e.g., Kleinsasser et al., 2015). Intervention or self-advocacy might also increase a sense of community and self-efficacy, which itself could have reinforcing effects on reducing bias and harassment.

Taken together, social psychological research seems to suggest that training regarding specific attitudes and correspondingly specific behavior may reduce bias and discrimination. Training also benefits targeted individuals. A challenge for organizational practitioners is identifying the specific attitude–behavior linkages amenable to training for both discrimination targets and those who might exhibit harassment or bias.

Research Question #3: How can training content be scaled to the needs of an organization that seeks to avoid discrimination and harassment, while also supporting its members who may have been targets of harassment and discrimination?

Topic 4: Bystander programs

By influencing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding sexual harassment and assault, bystander programs encourage and train individuals to intervene when they witness situations of harassment (Berdahl & Raver, 2011; Buchanan et al., 2014; Burns et al., 2019). Some bystander programs even boast empirical support, such as "Green Dot" (Coker et al., 2011, 2015, 2016), "Bringing in the Bystander" (Banyard et al., 2007; Senn & Forrest, 2015), and "One in Four" (Foubert & Perry, 2007). Although bystander intervention programs have been found to be broadly effective in high school and college students (Coker et al., 2011, 2015, 2016; Lee et al., 2007; Senn & Forrest, 2015), future research should analyze these programs and how they can be tailored for prevention of sexual harassment and assault within the workplace.

Another disadvantage of the current research on bystander intervention is that it has been primarily researched using Caucasian populations and focused on sexual harassment (e.g., Diamond-Welch et al., 2016; Kleinsasser et al., 2015; see Mulvey et al., 2016, and Nelson et al., 2010, for exceptions). There is very little research examining bystander interventions regarding race/ethnicity bias; those few studies are primarily composed of student populations and have shown mixed results (Nelson et al., 2010). Additional areas for exploration within bystander programs are both harassment and unlawful racial discrimination, socioeconomic status, and intersectionality (Edwards et al., 2014; McCall, 2005; Settles & Buchanan, 2014; Shields, 2008). Current studies on race-based bullying and bystander intervention show reason to suspect that bystander intervention programs could have a powerful impact on reducing incidences of racial and sexual harassment in the workplace (Mulvey et al., 2016).

Research Question #4: Is indirect training, such as bystander intervention, potentially more effective than direct behavioral modification training?

Topic 5: Training medium

Campbell et al. (2018, p. 550) warned that training via gamification or virtual reality may be well-received by trainees but could suffer from poor design and operationalization of parameters. At the same time having a gamification intervention might be a way to monitor trainee progress and have more time spent on a "fun" activity.[5] The effectiveness of this training regimen would need to be evaluated carefully, but psychologists have been successful modifying behavior with a

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[5]We thank K. Saboe for this suggestion though she might not phrase it exactly as it is here.

gamification approach (Weir, 2018). It is difficult to balance engagement with training with effectiveness in changing behavior; as Bezrukova et al. (2016) showed, voluntary participation (i.e., engagement in training) is related to positive attitudes about training but not necessarily behavioral change. Because training engagement is not a reliable indicator of training effectiveness, there should be alignment of program goals with implementation.

Research Question #5: How can training programs be made both more engaging and more effectively aligned with program goals?

Topic 6: How can academic research clarify, and how can practitioners utilize, a continuum of harm approach for interventions?

Instead of starting with a method or program of training or organizational change, researchers and practitioners might start by defining a continuum of targeted behaviors including sexual harassment or unlawful racial discrimination behaviors, etiologies, and protective factors. A continuum implies that the negative behaviors start in one form or level of intensity, maybe as jokes, then escalate, possibly as threats. Codifying the target behaviors that comprise harassment or bias along a continuum presents an opportunity to confront these behaviors via training and policy, and to clarify consequences.

Policy is not the forte of organizational practitioners and scientists, but organizational science and practice inform policy. Applied psychologists have already begun to investigate this notion of a continuum (Lim & Cortina, 2005). Other efforts (Cortina et al., 2018) have sought to define and clarify the scope of issues at stake by coining the term "perpetrator predation" to distinguish those who are targets from those who commit the discriminatory or harassing acts. Organizational practitioners should leverage insights from peers in domains such as social psychology and public health. For example, analysts at the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO; 2017) surveyed behavioral etiology, incidence, and protective factors surrounding sexual violence in the U.S. Department of Defense. This report drew heavily on work by public health scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Basile et al., 2014; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004; Wilkins et al., 2014) that placed sexual harassment within a continuum of harm including non-contact unwanted sexual behaviors, sexual harassment, and physical sexual assault. In an approach reflecting this continuum, organizational practitioners might work with the organization's equal employment opportunity office or insider threat office (or some equivalent) to develop strategy, intervention goals, means to identify organizational culture or managerial "problem spots," and metrics to evaluate progress. The objective might be to identify issues at a lower level of development (e.g., incivility) before they flare into incidents of discrimination or harassment. The GAO report's main lessons are that organizational phenomena, such as culture, leadership, and team, and intra-individual processes can inform interventions, performance management, and training in organizations, which are not the forte of policy makers.

Applied psychologists might expand awareness of the continuum of harm by building from previous research demonstrating the negative organizational consequences of culture and climate surrounding harassment and bias. Meta-analysis (Willness et al., 2007), individual studies (e.g., Antecol & Cobb-Clark, 2009; Lim & Cortina, 2005; McKay et al., 2007; Sadler et al., 2017), and systematic literature reviews (Johnson et al., 2018) have documented the impacts that harassment or bias have on organizations and employees, frequently in terms of increased quit rates from organizations or careers. These studies have specifically found that the perpetuation of these harassing or discriminatory behaviors is enabled when organizational culture and climate do not clearly address harassment and bias. Research on employee misconduct (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010) shows that employee conduct codes that are not reinforced are flouted, and unethical

behavior becomes more likely. From a continuum of harm perspective, if there is not intervention for harassment and bias at early stages of the continuum, one might wonder what other organizational problems also have not been addressed. The same research (McKay et al., 2007; Porath et al., 2015; Ruggs et al., 2011) shows that strong management action endorsing the value of diversity, or simply setting expectations for treating people well, leads to increased retention, performance, and ethical behavior.

A continuum of harm model implies a dynamic process.[6] Some might prefer a dimensional one (e.g., Gelfand et al., 1995). Academic research could clarify whether harassment or unlawful discrimination is dynamic and continuum-based, where unlawful racial discrimination behaviors seem innocent or vague at first but then escalate in intensity or type, or dimensional and construct-oriented, where unlawful racial discrimination behaviors do not escalate in intensity or type. We suggest that practitioners favor a continuum of harm model. Leaders and practitioners should treat identification and mitigation of these issues preferably at an early stage as part of the criteria of being a good leader. Organizational survey research (McKay et al., 2007; Medeiros & Griffith, 2019; Rubino et al., 2018) can identify problem areas at the team or division/department level, as harassment and discrimination are signs at some point on a continuum of counterproductive behavior.

> *Research Question #6:* How can practitioners develop the skill sets to work with managers to coordinate monitoring, policy, and mitigation regarding discrimination and harassment?

Topic 7: Professional competence and beliefs about change

Part of the answer to Research Question #6 concerns graduate training and development. If unlawful racial discrimination or sexual harassment behavior is a continuum of harm, there should be a commensurate continuum of intervention. The model I-O graduate psychology curriculum (Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Inc., 2016) does not include training on how to understand or address harassing or discriminatory behavior. Sexual harassment is mentioned once in the 2016 document, in passing, as a subset of occupational health psychology, and unlawful racial discrimination is not mentioned anywhere in the document. The graduate curriculum guidelines state, under General Knowledge and Skills, part 1, Ethical, Legal, Diversity, and International Issues, that "I-O psychologists should have knowledge of and should behave in accord with relevant ethical guidelines when consulting as well as conducting research" and then cites as an example the American Psychological Association's (2002, amended 2010) *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*[7] for reference. It is fair to conclude that applied psychologists are expected to maintain personal integrity and have general knowledge about sexual harassment and unlawful racial discrimination, but not to be educated in how to identify or provide guidance on how to intervene when organizations turn to them for expertise in dealing with these issues.

We call for an intentional focus from graduate curriculum or professional development perspectives in addressing issues of sexual harassment and unlawful racial discrimination. Consulting psychologists have developed methods and models of behavioral change (e.g., Bar-Haim et al., 2007; Osatuke et al., 2017) that could serve in part as the bases for intervening with those at risk

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[6]"Continuum of harm" in this sense is not consistent with the term "vicious cycle" used by Jones et al. (2017). A continuum of harm as used here and as defined by the CDC refers to a dynamic process in which small behaviors or incidental attitudes escalate to become problematic for the individual or target personnel (e.g., having negative affect to engaging in counterproductive thoughts to engaging purposefully in negative behavior). The "vicious cycle" in Jones et al. (2017) referred to the qualitative nature of biased behavior falling along the continua of subtlety, formality, and intentionality.

[7]https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx

of engaging in these behaviors; there is a similar lack of a curriculum knowledge base or practice guidelines for building resilience among those affected. Applied psychologists and organizational practitioners should believe people can change and that professionals can intervene effectively to create the conditions for change for individual contributors, work groups, and leaders. At the very least, training research, as bleak as its lessons are regarding transgressor behaviors, seems to show positive impacts in terms of improving the coping behavior of people who have been affected by harassment or unlawful racial discrimination.

> *Research Question #7*: What impact would mandatory sexual harassment or unlawful racial discrimination training for practitioners have on practitioner beliefs and practices?

Topic 8: Incorporating corporate social responsibility and reputation management as part of an intervention strategy

Applied psychologists should consider that leadership attention put toward reducing discrimination and harassment might fit well within a corporate social responsibility (CSR) framework (Aguinis & Glavas, 2013; Morgeson et al., 2013) as part of the intervention continuum approach. CSR research and practice has had an outward-facing "macro" perspective (Morgeson et al., 2013, p. 812) in which it has been studied and practiced from a strategy perspective (Aguinis & Glavas, 2013, p. 316). Yet improved intergroup relationships and "strengthening communities" are points of pride for some organizations. We propose that ongoing bias and harassment training for employees will integrate bias-free behavior as an aspect of embedded CSR. Current efforts at many organizations regarding harassment and unlawful racial discrimination might be described as peripheral to a true CSR approach, that is, something that is ongoing but "not integrated into an organization's strategy, routines, and operations" (Aguinis & Glavas, 2013, p. 314). An example of antidiscrimination and harassment efforts that are part of an organization but are not truly embedded in a CSR framework might include diversity reporting by Google (Brown, 2018) or by the U.S. Department of Justice (2018): While it is good that the organization supports awareness, it is unclear how the organization will use the information to inform its practices. An embedded CSR approach to reduction of discrimination and harassment would form the basis of a continuum-based intervention and better mobilize the workforce.

Embedding antiharassment training and diversity programs into a CSR framework would be further effective in helping to shape cultures of diversity and acceptance within an organization, which has been shown to be distinctively effective in reducing harmful behaviors in a variety of contexts (Kalev et al., 2006; Miller & Prentice, 2016; Tankard & Paluck, 2016). By embedding ongoing training into a CSR framework, organizations would take a step toward creating a cultural norm of inclusion and openness. Organizations with a strong cultural norm against biased and harassing behaviors have fewer incidences of such behaviors, and find that people are more willing to speak out when such behavior does occur (Buchanan et al., 2014; Keenan, 2002; McKay et al., 2007; Porath et al., 2015; Ruggs et al., 2011).

> *Research Question #8*: Do organizations that make normative behavioral expectations and injunctions regarding discriminatory or harassing behavior part of their embedded CSR find positive empirical outcomes?

Practitioner guidance

Initial guidance for practitioners seeking to address issues of harassment or unlawful discrimination would include asking what current higher-performing managers and leaders do to defeat or at least mitigate harassment and discrimination. Leadership should make it a point to learn about the social and cognitive psychology of discrimination and harassment. On the individual level, those

concerned about bias and harassment should look for allies among organizational attorneys or the training department or HR or employee affinity groups interested in these issues. For those working in areas of inclusion and diversity, try to frame the proposed diversity and inclusion initiative as part of leadership development consonant with better CSR. Practitioners should remember not to get enamored with the "bright shiny object" of cool training technology but instead look under the hood at how it could help track changes in participant attitudes, behavior, or cognitions. At the team or organization levels, the use of climate surveys or internal audits of harassment or discrimination claims can be used to measure training effectiveness. Finally, on both the individual and organizational levels, do not expect to rid your organization entirely of discrimination or harassment, but do not employ training as a "check the box" liability-waiver activity either. Encourage leaders to broaden their own thinking and challenge them to believe that, and act as if, no one should have to choose between being treated with respect and achieving the organization's mission.

Concluding remarks

An organization's reputational risk from discriminatory or harassing behavior has the potential to harm, shock, and outrage. Professional practices at different organizational levels could influence the organization's microlevel (changing the behavior of individuals) to the mesolevel (survey data identifying work group "hot spots" of incivility or occurrences of negative behavior) and the macrolevel (managerial focus on changing organizational climate as part of a CSR initiative). Applied psychologists, starting with leadership of SIOP and its partner societies, should make antidiscrimination and antiharassment education and development a mandatory component of graduate education and provide ongoing continuing education experiences through conferences; maybe SIOP committee membership should be contingent upon completing training. This article's literature review found scant evidence for the potential of one-time debiasing or antiharassment training to mitigate harassing or discriminatory behavior, let alone attitudes or organizational climate. Yet we argue that it is incumbent upon applied psychologists and organizational researchers to approach these issues with energy and optimism grounded in both proven and potential means of remediation and mitigation. The questions and guidance we have provided here are simply starting points. We should act as if Campbell et al.'s (2018) summary claim that "training works" is correct and endeavor as a field to test and support that claim with theoretically grounded, empirically verified practices. We have more to offer organizations, employees, and the general public than stale training programs and free coffee.

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