2020

Shyness Mindset and Sexual Harassment Responses Among Female College Students

Jessica Rose Winder
jessrwinder@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations

Part of the Clinical Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation
Winder, Jessica Rose, "Shyness Mindset and Sexual Harassment Responses Among Female College Students" (2020). Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations. 7781. https://huskiecommons.lib.niu.edu/allgraduate-thesesdissertations/7781

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate Research & Artistry at Huskie Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Research Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Huskie Commons. For more information, please contact jschumacher@niu.edu.
ABSTRACT

SHYNESS MINDSET AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT RESPONSES AMONG FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS

Jessica R. Winder, M.A.
Department of Psychology
Northern Illinois University, 2020
David P. Valentiner, Director

Sexual harassment is a common problem that has negative consequences on society as a whole and on individual well-being. Confronting sexual harassers has been shown to be an effective response. Victims of sexual harassment are also encouraged to report harassment. Sexual harassment has been associated with internalizing responses, such as depression and decreased self-esteem. These responses could negatively influence confronting and reporting behaviors. This study draws from previous mindset research. Results from this prior research showed evidence that shyness mindset affects responses to peer victimization among adolescents and college students. This study hypothesized that shyness mindset among female college students is associated with internalizing responses following sexual harassment and that this relationship is exacerbated by social anxiety. This study used a cross-sectional, self-report design using female college-aged participants who completed a series of questionnaires. Results from this study demonstrated significant associations between sexual harassment and feelings of self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem. When considering shyness mindset as a moderator in the relationship, there were significant associations primarily at low levels of shyness mindset, which is the opposite of the hypothesized direction. Analyses did not support the hypothesis.
presence of a three-way interaction. Depression also had an overall effect on classes missed due to feeling uncomfortable. These findings have implications for how both entity and incremental shyness mindsets are conceptualized, especially in the context of sexual harassment.
SHYNESS MINDSET AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT RESPONSES
AMONG FEMALE COLLEGE STUDENTS

BY
JESSICA R. WINDER

© 2020 Jessica R. Winder

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Thesis Director:
David P. Valentiner
TABLE OF CONTENTS

| LIST OF TABLES | v |
| LIST OF FIGURES | vi |
| LIST OF APPENDICES | vii |

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW .................................................. 1
   Social Anxiety .......................................................................................... 2
   Interpersonal Models of SAD ................................................................. 4
   Clark and Wells Model of SAD ............................................................... 5
   Shyness and Its Relations with Similar Constructs .................................. 8
   State Versus Trait Shyness ...................................................................... 10
   Mindset Theory ....................................................................................... 11
   Intelligence Mindset ............................................................................... 11
   Personality and Mindset Theory ............................................................. 13
   Shyness Mindset ..................................................................................... 14
   Sexual Harassment .................................................................................. 20
   Effects of Sexual Harassment ................................................................ 21
   Factors Influencing Incidence of Sexual Harassment ............................ 22
   Conceptualization and Measurement of Sexual Harassment .................. 23
   Responses to Sexual Harassment ............................................................ 23
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-Blame and Depression</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other-Blame</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness, Reporting, and Confronting</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reporting</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confronting</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Introduction</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This Study</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses 1-3</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. METHODS</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Experience Questionnaire (GEQ)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Experience Questionnaire (SEQ)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attribution of Blame Questionnaire (ABQ)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyness Entity Mindset Scale (SEMS)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Interaction Anxiety Scale-Short Form (SIAS-SF)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chapter 3. RESULTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Analysis</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Analysis</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypotheses 1-3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Anxiety and Sexual Harassment</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter 4. DISCUSSION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Descriptives</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQ Results</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary and Implications</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Harassment and Internalizing Experiences</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entity Shyness Mindset’s Unique Associations</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Anxiety Does Not Significantly Impact Shyness Mindset’s Effect</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Outcomes</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications and Limitations</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES 82

APPENDICES 95
### LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Correlations Among and Between Outcome Measures and Harassment Scales</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Descriptive Statics of Scales</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sexual Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) Scale Results for Hypotheses 1-3</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gender Experience Questionnaire (GEQ) Scale Results for Hypotheses 1-3</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Working Model of Main Hypotheses</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Study 2: Results of Path Analysis Predicting Responses to Peer Victimization</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Interaction of Shyness Mindset and Infantilization on Self-Blame</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Interaction of Shyness Mindset and Gender Policing on Self-Blame</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Interaction of Shyness Mindset and Sexual Coercion on Depression</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Interaction of Shyness Mindset and Sexually Crude/Offensive Behaviors on Self-Esteem</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Interaction of Shyness Mindset and Sexist Remarks on Self-Esteem</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Interaction of Social Anxiety and Gender Policing on Self-Blame</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Results of PROCESS Model 4 Testing Self-Blame as a Mediator on Harassment and Missed Classes (Past Week)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Results of PROCESS Model 4 Testing Depression as a Mediator on Harassment and Missed Classes (Past Week)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Results of PROCESS Model 4 Testing Self-Esteem as a Mediator on Harassment and Missed Classes (Past Week)</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Results of PROCESS Model 4 Testing Self-Blame as a Mediator on Harassment and Missed Classes (Ever)</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Results of PROCESS Model 4 Testing Depression as a Mediator on Harassment and Missed Classes (Ever)</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Results of PROCESS Model 4 Testing Self-Esteem as a Mediator on Harassment and Missed Classes (Ever)</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Questionnaires</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Demographics Questionnaire</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Sexual harassment is a common problem that results in negative financial, emotional, and health outcomes for victims. Reporting rates of sexual harassment for women range from 40% to 75% in the workplace ever (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2000; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; McDonald, 2011; United States Merit System Protection Board [USMSPB], 1988; Willness et al., 2007). With over $37 million reported in sexual harassment lawsuits reported in 2007 (Willness et al., 2007), job loss, and decreased work productivity, the cost of sexual harassment for society is steep (Fitzgerald et al., 1997). Furthermore, sexual harassment has negative psychological effects on the individual, often resulting in lower self-esteem and symptoms of anxiety and depression (Gutek & Koss, 1993). Women have also reported impacts on physical health such as insomnia and changes in appetite (Gutek & Koss, 1993). Due to the high prevalence and distressing outcomes, there is a need for further behavioral science research on sexual harassment.

There are many protective and risk factors that contribute to the experience of sexual harassment and influence post-harassment functioning. The proposed study sought to contribute to our knowledge of these factors. To provide a context for this study, the paper begins with a literature review. The literature review will first present shyness and social anxiety as related constructs followed by a description of mindset theory. This review of past research is fundamental for understanding shyness mindset, a potential moderator in the relationship between sexual harassment and psychosocial outcome variables. Based on the information
gathered from existing research, the expectation was that shyness mindset would strengthen the relationship between harassment victimization and internalizing responses, which would in turn have effects on behavior. Figure 1 illustrates these expected relationships and will be discussed in more detail. Following this literature review and discussion of a priori hypotheses, the results, implications, and limitations of this study will be presented.

![Figure 1. Working model of main hypotheses.](image)

**Social Anxiety**

Social anxiety and social anxiety disorder (SAD) are constructs that are important to understanding responses to sexual harassment, as they may exacerbate negative psychological outcomes associated with sexual harassment or decrease the likelihood of engaging in more productive responses. SAD is characterized by a chronic fear of social situations, such as those in which an individual is exposed to new people and possible scrutiny (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The individual recognizes this fear to be excessive or unreasonable. SAD is thought to have two distinct subtypes: generalized social phobia (GSP) and specific social phobia (SSP; Hook & Valentiner, 2002). SSP only applies to performance situations whereas GSP is
more debilitating with higher overall anxiety levels, fear of negative evaluations, and often social skill deficits.

SAD is a common problem that is often long-term and associated with several negative outcomes. SAD is estimated to have a high lifetime prevalence rate of 12.1% (Levine et al., 2014; Nagata et al., 2015). Ongoing research into SAD is important because the disorder is chronic and debilitating, often resulting in a decreased quality of life and social impairment (Grant et al., 2005). SAD can lead to underachievement in educational and professional capacities as well as decreased financial independence (Grant et al., 2005). These outcomes are distressing for socially anxious individuals and negatively impact employment, familial relationships, and friendships.

Biological and environmental factors contribute to the development of SAD. SAD has moderate heritability rates (ranging from .13 to .60 from a twin study meta-analysis), indicating a heritable genetic component in the development of social anxiety (Elizabeth et al., 2006; Scaini et al., 2014; Spence & Rapee, 2016). However, environmental influences are also significant factors in understanding SAD (Scaini et al., 2014). Relationships have been hypothesized to function as protective or risk factors in the development and maintenance of SAD. Consistent with this view, La Greca and Harrison (2005) found that adolescents (male and female, age 14-19, \( N = 421 \)) with quality close friendships and romantic relationships reported lower levels of social anxiety. Even after controlling for the protective qualities of friendships and relationships, peer victimization, specifically relational victimization, had a significant, unique association with reports of social anxiety.

Relational victimization is a nonphysical form of aggression comprised of three factors: social exclusion, friendship withdrawal, and spreading rumors (La Greca & Harrison, 2005).
Relational victimization is problematic because it is more difficult for outsiders to detect and stop compared to more physically aggressive forms of victimization. A later study using a two-month prospective research design found a bidirectional relationship between relational victimization and social anxiety in which adolescents with social anxiety appeared to be targets of relational victimization, and relational victimization experiences significantly predicted increases in levels of social anxiety (Siegel et al., 2009).

**Interpersonal Models of SAD**

The bidirectional relationship between SAD and relational victimization, an environmental factor, is consistent with other interpersonal models of SAD (Hook & Valentiner, 2002; Valentiner, Skowronski, et al., 2011), for which there is some support. Hook and Valentiner (2002) proposed that people with SAD may possess an underlying belief that one is not worthy of affection from others. Socially anxious individuals are hypothesized to attend to information supporting that belief. The model suggests that socially anxious individuals expect social rejection and dismiss affection inconsistent with the individual’s negative self-image. This model proposes that in response to dismissal, others distance themselves from the socially anxious individual, hindering the development of interpersonal relationships. This model also proposes that when others disengage from the socially anxious person, it reinforces the original underlying belief possessed by those with SAD, creating a bidirectional relationship, evidenced by empirical research (Valentiner et al., 2017).

Self-verification theory further explains the unique cognitive evaluations and preferences for negative social feedback experienced by individuals with social anxiety. Self-verification theory states that individuals prefer information about themselves that are congruent with their
self-image, dismissing social evaluations from peers that are inconsistent with that self-image (Valentiner, Skowronski, et al., 2011). Researchers found that those with social anxiety are fearful of positive and negative social evaluation, and that negative social feedback was preferred.

In a study conducted by Wallace and Alden (1997), results suggested that individuals with social phobia felt less anxiety associated with negative social interactions as the individuals felt that expectations for subsequent social interactions would not increase. A later study’s results using incoming college freshman students found that those with low levels of self-esteem experienced greater subsequent negative peer evaluations (Valentiner et al., 2017). Additionally, these students reported disliking peers who expressed “liking” of the participant. These participants also tended to report higher levels of social anxiety. The studies referenced provide support for self-verification theory in which participants with higher levels of social anxiety had lower negative responses to social feedback that was in agreement with their self-perception. If these interpersonal formulations are correct, helping socially anxious individuals to have more adaptive responses to victimization might help them develop a more positive self-image and break cycles that are thought to maintain social anxiety. In this study, the presence of social anxiety was thought to possibly increase internalizing responses to sexual harassment as those responses would be consistent with self-image.

Clark and Wells Model of SAD

Another prominent model for understanding SAD was developed by Clark and Wells (1995; see also Clark, 2001). The model proposes that when an individual with SAD enters or
anticipates entering a social situation, they experience negative, automatic thoughts. Anxiety increases prior to the event as memories of past social failures become more accessible and expectancies of social rejection increase. These thoughts may influence socially anxious individuals to avoid the social event. However, if these individuals decide to engage with the social event, maladaptive thought processes are often triggered, which takes attention away from the external social event. In a process referred to as self-focused attention, the individual will focus their attention internally rather than to external stimuli. Self-focused attention increases anxious physical responses (sweating, blushing, etc.). These responses reinforce self-focused attention as the individual is concerned that they are communicating visible signs of their anxiety to others (Clark, 2001).

Automatic thoughts, self-focused attention, and physiological symptoms are thought to lead to the use safety behaviors (Clark, 2001; Clark & Wells, 1995). Safety behaviors are actions intended to reduce the likelihood of a negative event and the amount of anxiety felt in the situation. Examples of safety behaviors include avoiding eye contact or wearing extra layers of clothing. These safety behaviors often do not reduce the individual's anxiety and can make signs of anxiety even more noticeable. For instance, an individual worried about sweating in social scenarios may wear an extra sweater. Wearing the sweater makes them warmer and thus even more likely to sweat. This pattern further promotes self-focused attention and physiological symptoms.

Following the event, the socially anxious individual may engage in post-event processing. Post event processing involves replaying the event in their mind, focusing on the negative aspects of the interaction or ‘failures’ (Clark, 2001). Those with SAD, concerned with loss of status, worth, or rejection, tend to overestimate the consequences of these social
interactions (Clark & Wells, 1995; Hofmann, 2007). Rumination over the perceived failure of the interaction is believed to reinforce the underlying negative self-image. Rumination may increase anticipatory anxiety related to future social situations, potentially deterring engagement in these scenarios, as well as increasing the overall level of anxiety.

There are similarities and differences between the interpersonal model (Alden & Wallace, 1995; La Greca & Harrison, 2005; Valentiner, Skowronski, et al., 2011; Wallace & Alden, 1997) and the Clark and Wells (1995) model. Both models support the idea that individuals with SAD participate in a self-maintaining feedback loop. More explicitly, individuals’ negative cognitions about themselves reinforce the anxiety felt in later anticipated social events, creating a cyclical emotional experience. However, the interpersonal model emphasizes self-image whereas the Clark and Wells model emphasizes self-focused attention. These constructs are related to each other in that they both involve the relationship between an individual’s self-concept and how that view influences their cognitions. These cognitions then influence interactions with others; the two models offer alternate perspectives for how. The Clark and Wells model suggests that socially anxious individuals could engage in social withdrawal as a response whereas the interpersonal model suggests that others would distance themselves from the socially anxious individual. In sexual harassment victimization, an individual with social anxiety might react with negative self-views, blaming themselves for the interactions and participating in maladaptive self-focus of attention and negative automatic thoughts. These internal experiences may lead to social avoidance.

Clark and Wells (1995) do not discuss victimization explicitly in their analysis of SAD. However, they do argue that if individuals can change their maladaptive thoughts that contribute to their social anxiety, they may improve their ability to build relationships with others as
referenced in the interpersonal models. La Greca and Harrison (2005) suggest that having quality relationships for those with social anxiety could be protective in the relationship between social anxiety and victimization. This protective role of relationships may also be true for those experiencing sexual harassment as a form of victimization. More importantly, sexual harassment may be a risk factor for the development or maintenance of social anxiety.

Shyness and Its Relations with Similar Constructs

Another body of literature that shares striking similarities to the literature on social anxiety and SAD is that of shyness. Shyness in early, middle, and later childhood has been conceptualized as a temperament style. Temperament is defined as stable, psychological feelings paired with enduring and consistent behavioral patterns (Perez-Edgar & Fox, 2005). These feelings and behavior patterns are generally believed to form during early childhood and potentially impact personality traits in adulthood (Kagan, 2010). Much of the existing literature argues that shyness and social anxiety/SAD are part of a lifelong progression that begins in infancy (Clauss & Blackford, 2012; Kagan & Snidman, 2004; Schwartz et al., 1999). However, there does not appear to be an empirical basis for considering shyness, social anxiety, and SAD as discrete constructions, demonstrated by shared behaviors and common physiological markers (Beidel et al., 1985; Chavira et al., 2002; Pilkonis, 1977; Perez-Edgar & Fox, 2005). Other studies have also found these constructs to be indistinguishable in measurement (Anderson & Harvey, 1988). Adoption of the developmental progression of shyness model as opposed to considering shyness indistinguishable from similar constructs seems to depend on theoretical considerations and researcher preferences.
Shyness as a construct has been defined as a set of cognitions and behaviors characterized by heightened levels of concern for social evaluation, resulting in discomfort in social situations (Henderson et al., 2014). These cognitions and behaviors often include social withdrawal and avoidance. Some people experience shyness in specific social situations, such as when performing. For others, shyness is more chronic and pervasive. These distinctions are reminiscent of the differences between SSP and GSP, respectively. Severe shyness is sometimes viewed as a diagnosable disorder when it disrupts daily functioning (i.e., SAD; Scott, 2006). In one study (St. Lorant et al., 2000), as many as 97% of individuals with severe shyness were deemed to have met criteria for SAD, further supporting the similarities between shyness and SAD.

Prior studies have suggested a link between behavior inhibition, construed as unease or avoidance of unfamiliar stimuli and social interactions in early childhood, and shy temperament, with behavioral inhibition leading to later shyness (Garcia-Coll et al., 1984; Hirshfeld-Baker et al., 2007; Lahat et al., 2014; Prior et al., 2000). Connections have also been established between shyness and continuing experiences of internalizing issues and anxious psychopathology in adulthood (Beidel & Turner, 2007). Researchers have attempted to elucidate how trait shyness may develop into social anxiety/SAD. Children with shy temperament tend to avoid socializing compared to non-shy children, leading to fewer opportunities to develop social skills and less habituation to unfamiliar stimuli (Jones et al., 2014). Shy temperament has also been linked to internalizing negative emotion, low self-esteem, and low self-worth among other negative emotional experiences (Eisenberg et al., 1995; Jones et al., 2014; Schmidt & Fox, 1995). These negative outcomes could also include heightened concern for the self, similar to the idea of self-
focused attention discussed in the Clark and Wells model (1995) of social anxiety/SAD (Jones et al., 2014; Schmidt et al., 1999).

**State Versus Trait Shyness**

Shyness in the context of sexual harassment may be considered a state instead of a trait. This approach is useful because sexual harassment may elicit shy emotions and behavioral responses that would ordinarily not be present in other social situations for the victim. Sexual harassment can be conceptualized as a specific type of social conflict that could prompt an experience of anxiety or feelings of shyness. The distinction between state and trait is important because state shyness occurs in a general social context, not specific to a particular social stimulus.

For those with a shy temperament or trait or social anxiety, there is a tendency to exhibit shy behavior at a trait level. In other words, most social situations would elicit similar reactions as the stimulus (i.e., social interaction) is generalized across situations. Shyness is considered a trait when evidenced by long-term behavioral inhibition, yet people can experience shyness as a state in specific contexts. Jennifer Beer (2002) defines state shyness as “feelings of shyness” (p. 1009). Experiencing state shyness occurs as a result of particular social stimuli.

An earlier study conducted by Asendorpf (1986) supported the view that state shyness and trait shyness are related but separable constructs. Asendorpf (1986) defined trait shyness as stable, interindividual differences in shyness whereas state shyness occurs only in specific social interactions that elicit anxiety. When asked to identify interaction partners that elicited feelings of shyness, those low in trait shyness had similar responses to individuals high in trait shyness: strangers, potential romantic partners, and authority figures (Asendorpf, 1986; Zimbardo, 1977).
The perception of potential evaluation within the interaction was associated with increased levels of state shyness (Asendorpf, 1986).

Asendorpf also believed that state shyness can be associated with positive affect. Specifically, according to Asendorpf, those with state shyness may feel a mixed emotional state. These feelings of shyness involve elevated levels of anxiety interacting with positive emotions such as interest or curiosity. Those experiencing state shyness are motivated to interact with others but also to avoid them (Asendorpf, 1986). The idea of state shyness suggests that shyness can be a discrete emotion that is experienced in some social scenarios, such as sexual harassment, but need not be thought of as an enduring personality trait. How one perceives the malleability of their state shyness, or shyness mindset, may impact responses to a social transgression as believing in the ability to change shyness may help to elicit particular, constructive responses despite the discomfort experienced in the social situation.

Mindset Theory

Mindset theory has helped researchers to understand shyness. Before discussing shyness in this context, it is important to consider the background of mindset theory more generally. A mindset is considered an established attitude, or a way of thinking, that can be applied to various personal characteristics (Yeager & Dweck, 2012), including shyness. Specifically, mindset is an implicit self-theory that influences how an individual perceives their ability to achieve growth.

Intelligence Mindset

Dweck (1999), a pioneering researcher of implicit self-theories, studied mindset applied to the construct of intelligence. Dweck and colleagues have conducted extensive research to
evaluate the effect of individuals’ implicit beliefs of the malleability of their own intelligence on performance outcomes. Dweck hypothesized that one’s mindset or implicit beliefs would influence relevant outcomes as well as reactions to those outcomes. Dweck and colleagues have amassed considerable evidence that one’s mindset when considering his or her own intelligence has significant consequences on academic performance (Blackwell et al., 2007; Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Mangels et al., 2006).

Dweck’s conceptualization of implicit theories contrasts two different cognitive mindsets: entity and incremental. Entity mindset is also referred to as a fixed mindset in which one believes that a specific characteristic within oneself or others cannot be changed (Dweck, 1999). An incremental mindset is synonymous with growth mindset in which an individual believes that a specific characteristic is malleable or can be improved upon with effort. Dweck applied mindset theory to the intelligence domain. Those who possessed an entity mindset regarding their own intelligence believe that their intelligence cannot be changed, and those with an incremental intelligence mindset believe their own intelligence can be altered.

Dweck (1999) demonstrated that intelligence entity mindset led to decreases in motivation and performance outcomes on tasks. Regarding the implicit theory about intelligence, entity theorists are performance-oriented whereas incremental theorists are mastery-oriented (Dweck, 1999; Mangels et al., 2006), meaning that entity theorists are focused on the result of achieving success on a task rather than the process of learning how to complete the task. Dweck (1999) observed that entity intelligence theorists wanted to avoid appearing inferior to their peers. Being presented with easier tasks and opportunities to outperform others was preferred because the lower difficulty level of these tasks increased the likelihood of achieving high performance (Beer, 2002; Dweck, 1999). When faced with challenging tasks, entity intelligence
theorists exhibited a decrease in self-esteem, especially if he or she struggled or failed on the task (Dweck, 1999). However, incremental intelligence theorists believed that academic challenges, although difficult and more likely to result in failure, leads to learning (Moser et al., 2011), which ultimately helps to increase intelligence and self-esteem. Thus, ‘easy’ tasks can be considered a waste of time to an incremental intelligence theorist (Beer, 2002; Dweck, 1999).

Dweck and Leggett (1988) found that over 80% of those with an entity intelligence mindset chose tasks that were considered easier and less likely to produce errors, yet 60% of incremental theorists chose tasks that were described as challenging but useful for learning something new.

It is important to note that mindset beliefs can differ across domains. An individual possessing an entity intelligence mindset does not necessarily have this same mindset regarding other personal characteristics and traits; the correlation between mindset dimensions averages around .30 (Dweck et al., 1995; Schroder et al., 2015; Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). To further illustrate, one could have a fixed mindset about one’s own intelligence and have a growth mindset regarding shyness. Furthermore, not all mindset beliefs are applied to the self. In certain domains, such as personality, entity or incremental theorists apply their mindsets to the behaviors of others.

**Personality and Mindset Theory**

Mindset theory has also been applied to personality research. One of the earlier mindset studies from Erdley et al. Dweck (1997) examined personality mindset’s influence on social behavior. Following a “failed” social task in which 63 midwestern elementary school children were initially rejected by potential pen pals (confederates), researchers from the Erdley (1997) study assessed their personality mindset. Unsurprisingly, those that endorsed an entity
personality mindset were more likely to endorse performance goals (acceptance to a pen-pal club) compared to incremental personality mindset (improving skills related to making friends). This result was similar to the findings of the Dweck (1999) study that found that incremental intelligence theorists were more likely to endorse learning goals that were associated with increased effort and higher academic achievement compared to entity intelligence theorists.

A later study (Yeager et al., 2011) found that those with an entity personality mindset tend to have stronger desires for revenge in response to peer conflicts. Yeager and colleagues (2011) found that one’s personality mindset and the desire for vengeance could be altered through an intervention. In this study, 187 Finnish high school students read an article about how people could change and subsequently participated in a writing task. The findings from that study was discussed in a later meta-analysis (Yeager et al., 2013). The meta-analysis was combined with a new study which also showed that high school students with entity personality mindset had greater hostile biases and aggressive desires as demonstrated by questions following provocation. It is possible that those who possess an entity personality mindset apply more vengeful responses because of the belief that those who are eliciting these negative responses are incapable of changing or learning, and/or the antagonists are just “bad people” (Yeager et al., 2013). Results from both studies found that changing from an entity personality mindset to an incremental one decreased feelings of vengeance in response to peer conflicts.

Shyness Mindset

Research in other mindset domains has influenced our understanding of feelings of shyness. Feelings of shyness in this study were thought to play a role in responses to sexual harassment. Beer (2002) applied mindset theory to feelings of shyness in three studies. Study 1
aimed to determine whether shyness mindset is related to social goals and responses to social challenges with 202 psychology undergraduate students. Beer used a continuous measure of shyness mindset beliefs in which higher scores indicated entity mindset beliefs regarding one’s own shyness, and lower scores indicated incremental mindset beliefs. Beer found that shyness mindset is negatively correlated with the adoption of learning goals related to overcoming shyness. Shyness mindset was also found to be negatively related to approach behaviors, which led Beer (2002) to theorize that high scores on shyness mindset would be negatively related to avoidance behaviors. However, shy participants, regardless of scores across the shyness mindset distribution, reported similar avoidance tendencies in which they seem to be more oriented towards social threats than individuals who did not endorse being shy.

Study 2 (Beer 2002) expanded on the findings from Study 1. Endorsement of entity or incremental shyness mindsets was expected to influence the adoption of social avoidance strategies among 238 psychology undergraduate students. Findings suggested that the use of social avoidance strategies was positively correlated with shyness mindset, low social confidence, and personality mindset.

Study 3 (using 122 psychology undergraduate students) aimed to test these shyness mindset hypotheses with a more stringent method using actual social interactions in which observer report was also used (Beer, 2002). Shyness mindset again was positively associated with more avoidant social interactions and engagement in avoidant behaviors. Among shy participants, shyness mindset was associated with peers’ perceptions of social skills and participants’ reports of anxiety during social interactions. These results were associated with reports of less nervous feelings. However, shy participants regardless of mindset reported beliefs that social behavior is associated with public consequences. Despite these beliefs, observers of
participants attributed fewer undesirable public social consequences to incremental shyness peers, likely because of the perception of social skill adeptness and associated confidence in ability to improve their shyness.

Findings from the Beer (2002) studies on shyness mindset could be useful in considering individual differences in responses to social transgressions, including sexual harassment. Shyness mindset might explain why some victims of harassment practice assertive versus avoidant response behaviors. Those high in shyness mindset may not have the confidence to engage in reporting the harassment or confronting the harasser but may be more likely to internalize, avoiding potential social conflict.

In another study on shyness mindset (Valentiner, Mounts, et al., 2011), college freshmen were assessed as they transitioned to college. It was reasoned that growth shyness mindset would be associated with persistence through new situations as well as openness and interest in social opportunities. Specifically, researchers hypothesized that lower levels of shyness mindset would be associated with decreases in performance anxiety. Results did indicate that believing shyness to be a fixed trait was associated with an increased likelihood of maintaining performance anxiety. These relationships were partially mediated by college belongingness, indicating that having social support may serve to decrease overall anxiety and rigid beliefs about that anxiety.

Valentiner et al. (2013) examined how shyness mindset related to social anxiety symptoms for 60 patients in an intensive exposure treatment program for a variety of anxiety disorders. Exposure treatments require participants to confront their fear-inducing stimuli while also engaging in new behaviors. Researchers found that shyness mindset prior to treatment predicted changes in social anxiety symptoms within the clinical sample. Those with a prior growth shyness mindset showed greater reduction in social anxiety during treatment; although
social anxiety improved regardless of endorsing an entity or incremental mindset due to the exposure treatment, pre-treatment shyness mindset correlated with how much improvement in social anxiety symptoms was experienced (Valentiner et al., 2013). In that study, shyness mindset’s effects may have been mediated by the number of social anxiety exposures versus other types of exposures, as social anxiety exposures specifically target fears related to social situations.

Understanding shyness mindset might lead to improved treatment and interventions. Two studies attempted to show that one’s mindset about one’s shyness could be changed, specifically from a fixed to a growth mindset. The first study (Jarek & Valentiner, 2012), using an intervention approach adapted from an intelligence mindset intervention (Aronson et al., 2002), demonstrated that shyness mindset is malleable in a nonclinical, college student population. The second study (Gillen, 2014) examined the malleability of mindset in a nonclinical population in order to determine if shyness mindset could be altered in a clinical population. Gillen’s (2014) findings were consistent with the results from the nonclinical population (Jarek & Valentiner, 2012). Patients in an anxiety treatment program that completed the shyness mindset intervention showed a greater reduction in shyness mindset compared to the control condition using the Implicit Self-Theories of Shyness scale (Beer, 2002; Gillen, 2014).

Recently, Valentiner, Mounts, et al. (2018) conducted a study on shyness mindset and peer victimization among adolescents. Results showed that shyness mindset moderated the relationships of peer victimization with peer support and depression. Specifically, at higher levels of shyness mindset, peer victimization was more strongly related to depression.

Two subsequent studies on peer victimization’s relationship with shyness mindset were then conducted (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). Study 1 attempted to differentiate shyness mindset
from related constructs (peer relationship mindset and personality mindset). Furthermore, Study 1 examined late adolescence whereas the prior study (Valentiner et al., 2019) assessed middle adolescence. Valentiner and Mounts (2020) found that shyness mindset appears to be distinct and was uniquely predictive of peer victimization responses of depression and shame, indicating that shyness mindset is a good predictor of internalizing responses to peer victimization even after controlling for other mindset constructs (Figure 2). Personality mindset predicted hate and retaliation, which are externalizing responses.

Note: N = 215. * p < .01. Correlated residuals and non-significant causal pathways presented in gray. Multiple R’s = .36*, .29*, .24*, and .29*, respectively.

Figure 2. Study 2: Results of path analysis predicting responses to peer victimization (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020).
Study 2 of Valentiner and Mounts (2020) examined whether changes in shyness mindset had an influence on internalizing responses to peer victimization. After participating in a shyness mindset intervention, there was a reduction in shyness mindset scores. Most importantly, internalizing responses to victimization were lower in the intervention condition than the non-intervention control condition.

Although fairly new, the collective research on shyness mindset demonstrates the applicability of mindset theory and its importance to shyness as a construct. Beer’s (2002) findings indicated that mindset theory could be a potential explanation for differences in social behavior among shy individuals. Shyness mindset, for instance, may influence behavioral and affective responses to social situations as demonstrated by later research in which shyness mindset predicted outcomes related to anxiety and internalizing responses in clinical and non-clinical samples (Valentiner, Mounts, et al., 2011; Valentiner et al., 2013; Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). These responses were evident in adolescents experiencing peer victimization (Valentiner et al., 2019; Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). Shyness mindset could also be an important factor in predicting responses to sexual harassment.

Continued research in shyness mindset is important for several reasons. The study of mindset theory as it relates to socially inhibited behavior may help prevent the development or curb the effects of social anxiety disorder and mitigate the consequences of shyness (Valentiner, Mounts, et al., 2011). Furthermore, shyness mindset can also be changed, and changes in mindset have been shown to be helpful in reducing negative effects of victimization (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020).
Victimization is a broad category that includes sexual harassment. What has not been studied thus far is shyness mindset’s effects on responses to sexual harassment. If victims of sexual harassment hold an entity shyness mindset, they may interpret their state anxiety as self-relevant and therefore have more internalizing responses (i.e., shame, self-blame, etc.). The results of Valentiner and Mounts (2020) suggest that high shyness mindset (entity shyness mindset) is associated with internalizing responses among adolescents exposed to bullying, presumably because of entity shyness mindset in combination with self-blame. Feelings of depression or shame that emerge in response to sexual harassment victimization would not likely be associated with reporting or confronting behavior since those are externalizing responses; they would more likely lead to avoidance behaviors. Shyness mindset might be associated with negative internalizing responses and decrease approach response behaviors.

**Sexual Harassment**

Approximately 40-75% of women and 13-31% of men have reported experiencing some level of sexual harassment in the workplace (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2000; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; USMSP, 1988; Willness et al., 2007). Comparably, 42-90% of women reported experiencing sexual harassment in a college setting (Baker et al., 1990). Due to the higher availability of research on sexual harassment as it pertains to women, the focus of this discussion will be on the female experience of such social transgressions.

Sexual harassment is most broadly defined as unwanted sexual advances or behavior, often associated with the work environment (Riger, 1991). Researchers have traditionally distinguished two major forms of this type of harassment. These two forms are known as quid pro quo and hostile environment (Welsh, 1999). Quid pro quo specifically refers to the
exchanging of something (e.g., a promotion) for a sexual favor. Hostile environment encompasses behaviors that interfere with the recipient’s ability to perform tasks or creates an offensive working situation (e.g., sexual jokes). Sexually harassing behaviors include, but are not limited to, sexual attention, fondling, and sexually coercive acts (Barak et al., 1992).

Leskinen and Cortina (2014) suggest that related to sexual harassment, there is a third construct known as gender harassment. It is not clear if gender harassment describes an aspect of hostile environment or is a distinct construct. Gender harassment, commonly referred to as sexism, is behavior that conveys negative attitudes about a specific gender, most commonly women. Sexual favors or cooperation are not the goal of gender harassment. Gender harassing behaviors include sexist remarks, sexually crude/offensive behaviors, infantilization (treating one as if they were a child), work/family policing (suggestions of appropriate work-life balance for a woman), and gender policing (ideas about how men and women ‘should’ behave). For the purposes of this review, gender harassment, along with quid pro quo and hostile environments, will be included as forms of sexual harassment.

**Effects of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment has negative effects on an individual’s occupation as it is considered one of the greatest barriers to upward career movement and work-related satisfaction for women (Blau & DeVaro, 2007; Hicks-Clark & Iles, 2000; Morrow et al., 1994; Schneider et al., 1997; Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). Sexual harassment is also associated with decreased work performance as measured by official performance ratings, in-role behavior ratings, and performance measures (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Fitzgerald et al., 1999; Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015), presumably due to low workplace satisfaction, measured using general
satisfaction statement measures. Furthermore, sexual harassment is costly. The price tag of sexual harassment was over $37 million in litigation costs in 2007 alone (Willness et al., 2007).

Sexual harassment has also been found to have negative physiological and psychological effects on the individual (Chan et al., 2008; Charney & Russell, 1994). Self-report survey data suggest a relationship between sexual harassment victimization and reports of headaches, decreased appetite, gastrointestinal issues, weight loss, and decreased sleep (Chan et al., 2008; Charney & Russell, 1994; Hewitt Loy & Stewart, 1984; Magley et al., 1999; Wasti et al., 2000). Psychologically, the stress from sexual harassment experiences has been associated with decreased self-esteem and increased depression (Chan et al., 2008, Glomb et al., 1999; Harned & Fitzgerald, 2002). Other psychological effects include anger, anxiety, humiliation, irritability, fear, and helplessness (Charney & Russell, 1994; Hewitt Loy & Stewart, 1984).

Factors Influencing Incidence of Sexual Harassment

Several factors either contribute to or are protective from the incidence of sexual harassment. For instance, the workplace environment has a prominent influence. The incidence of sexual harassment against women is more likely to occur in male-dominated work environments (Gruber, 1998). Gruber (1998) suggests that in male-dominated work environments, women are perceived as threats to privilege and power that is typically designated for men, as though the presence of women infringe on the culture of the workplace.

Organizational tolerance for sexual harassment, an aspect of workplace environment, is influenced by leadership response as well (Gruber, 1998). Sexual harassment is less likely to occur in work environments in which leaders are not only responsive to complaints but also visibly proactive in prevention. However, even if the organization portrays an intolerance
towards sexual harassment, women can feel that their complaints are not taken seriously or that their complaints will result in punishment to themselves (Fitzgerald et al., 1997).

Conceptualization and Measurement of Sexual Harassment

Currently, a comprehensive model of sexual harassment has not been developed, presumably due to the various factors and the complex interactions between these factors. Much of the existing research on sexual harassment is gender specific and measures of sexual harassment tend to reflect this. The Gender Experience Questionnaire (Leskinen & Cortina, 2004) and the Sexual Experience Questionnaire (Fitzgerald et al., 1988), for example, are two measures of sexual and gender harassment that include questions about sexism. Sexist behaviors and experiences are inherently male-on-female transgressions considering current social structures. Developing or evaluating a measurement model of sexual harassment is beyond the scope of this study. Considering the goals of this study and limitations of the existing literature, the use of a survey-based strategy of measurement offered a reasonable and relatively comprehensive assessment of the domain.

Responses to Sexual Harassment

There are multiple ways an individual can respond to sexual harassment, and these responses could be influenced by shyness and shyness mindset. Research on mindset as it relates to bullying and peer victimization in children and adolescents has demonstrated that shyness mindset influences responses to those situations (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). The effect shyness mindset has on responses to sexual harassment may be similar. Responses to sexual harassment can range from self-blame, which can result in internalizing symptoms, to action.
Fitzgerald (1990) classified these responses as internal or external. External responses involve direct problem solving and action. Examples include seeking instrumental social support and reporting.

Internal responses are focused on managing the emotional and cognitive reactions to the event. Examples of internal responses include denial and attribution of blame (Fitzgerald et al., Swan, & Fischer, 1995). Based on the findings of Valentiner and Mounts (2020) concerning peer victimization, those high in shyness mindset were thought to respond to incidences of sexual harassment with internalizing responses such as shame or depression. Self-blame, a probable mediator of these effects, has been found to be a deterrent to reporting sexual harassment (Adams et al., 1983; De Judicibus & McCabe, 2001; Jensen & Gutek, 1982). Combining the experience of self-blame with entity shyness mindset would discourage external social responses as approach behaviors would not match perceptions of oneself and one’s capabilities in challenging social situations.

Conversely, findings from Hershcovis and Barling (2010), suggested that placing blame on the perpetrator resulted in more externalizing responses to sexual harassment, including confrontation and reporting. This may be because placing blame on another is not self-relevant, and those who have an entity shyness mindset may focus attention internally during negative social interactions, similar to the Clark and Wells (1995) model of social anxiety. There are many other factors that influence these responses, including self-esteem (Malovich & Stake, 1990), perceptions of organizational tolerance (Adams-Roy & Barling, 1998), and culture (Kalof et al., 2001). The existing research has not examined how mindset is related to responses to sexual harassment. The proposed study examined whether shyness mindset is a factor related to these responses.
Self-Blame and Depression

Self-blame is an attributional response that is believed to influence coping with a negative event (Cascardi & O’Leary, 1992). For example, following a traumatic event, individuals are more likely to blame themselves if they feel that they could have avoided the event (Davis et al., 1996). Two different types of self-blame have been identified by early research: characterological and behavioral (Janoff-Bulman, 1979). Behavioral self-blame can be adaptive as it restores one’s perceived control over their environment (Cascardi & O’Leary, 1992; Janoff-Bulman, 1979). In contrast, characterological self-blame is more esteem-based, focuses on character rather than behavior, and is correlated with depression (Janoff-Bulman, 1979), and is, thus, less adaptive. A study examining peer victimization among middle school children found characterological self-blame to be predictive of loneliness, anxiety, and low self-worth associated with victimization (Graham & Juvonen, 1998). In this study, shyness mindset was proposed to moderate associations between sexual harassment victimization and characterological self-blame. As previously stated, high shyness mindset has been associated with outcomes that are highly correlated with internal experiences, such as depression (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). Since self-blame is an internal response that also shows correlations with depression, it was expected that shyness mindset in a sexual harassment situation would yield a stronger association with self-blame.

Gilbert and Miles (2000) found that feelings of depression are associated with self-blame after a negative social experience and found no associations of depression with other-blame. As previously mentioned, sexual harassment has been associated with poor psychological outcomes including depression (Gutek & Koss, 1993). Victims of similar transgressions reported that
feelings of depression were a direct consequence of harassment (Bjorkqvist et al., 1994). Additionally, reporters of sexual harassment receive less support from their peers (Marin & Guadagno, 1999). A lack of strong peer relationships can increase internalizing symptoms like depression. Shyness mindset may be another factor associated with depression. Those high in shyness mindset often use more socially avoidant behaviors and are perceived as doing so by observers (Beer, 2002). These behaviors may be associated with depressed feelings since social support is likely to be more difficult to attain. Furthermore, Valentiner and Mounts (2020) found significant correlations between high levels of shyness mindset and feelings of depression responses to peer victimization. Feelings of depression is a possible response to sexual harassment, and this may be particularly true for those high in shyness mindset.

Other-Blame

Other-blame refers to attributions of blame to another person or environment for what one has experienced (Garnefski et al., 2002; Garnefski & Kraaij, 2006). Factors that may influence an individual to blame someone else for a negative incident include characteristics of the relationship between the victim and the other person, personal characteristics, and the nature of the event (Tennen & Affleck, 1990). Across multiple studies, other-blame was found to be associated with poor adjustment with some notable exceptions.

Some studies found that there are certain scenarios, such as sexual assault or physically dangerous work environments, where other-blame was not associated with adjustment (Brewin, 1985; Meyer & Taylor, 1986; Tennen & Affleck, 1990). These situations can be severe. Other-blame is associated with the victim believing that they are not in control and that others are ultimately unreliable (Tennen & Affleck, 1990). However, in these specific instances, victims
can sometimes receive higher levels of social support because perpetrators (i.e., rapists, supervisors) are deemed worthy of blame by others (Brewin, 1985; Meyer & Taylor, 1986; Tennen & Affleck, 1990). This social support seemed to lessen poor adjustment that typically arises from other-blame.

**Assertiveness, Reporting, and Confronting**

Other-blame could be associate with assertive responses. Assertiveness has been defined as a social skill comprised of a set of confident behaviors, such as expressing potentially unpopular opinions, saying no to requests, and initiating interactions (Aoki et al., 2017). It has also been referred to as being socially bold (Rathus, 1973). Adams-Roy and Barling (1998) labeled assertive behavior as either positive or negative. Positive assertive behaviors include the ability to express positive emotions to others, such as affection. Negative assertive behaviors include expressing displeasure, such as telling someone that their actions made you feel angry. These responses are not necessarily negative or positive in terms of value but are labeled as such to describe the affect or emotion associated with the assertive action. Specific types of assertive responses include reporting and confronting.

**Reporting**

Several factors influence the likelihood of reporting sexual harassment, including the victim’s perception of the behavior. More specifically, harassing behavior needs to be labeled harassment by the victim for the behavior to be reported as such. Victims might be unaware of, or disagree with, definitions of sexual harassment, or they may be unwilling to call these behaviors harassment (Ilies et al., 2003). Some women have objectively reported sexual
harassment behaviors but have not perceived or labeled themselves as being sexually harassed (Barak et al., 1992). Sexual harassment and reporting also have effects on the victim’s relationships with co-workers, which factors into the decision of whether or not to report an incident of harassment. Labeling an event as harassment and reporting that event can result in peers’ perceptions of higher assertiveness. However, this reporting can also result in less trust of the victim (Marin & Guadagno, 1999). Knowing that reporting can negatively impact peer relationships presumably decreases the likelihood a victim reports the transgression.

The organization (i.e., workplace) in which an incident could occur influences women’s perceptions of justice. Adams-Roy and Barling (1998) found that perceptions of whether an organization will respond appropriately to a report (as measured by the Moorman’s [1991] 8-item organizational justice scale) predicted whether a woman would follow through with reporting sexual harassment to authorities of the organization. Furthermore, when a woman did report, perceptions of organizational justice often decreased. This outcome suggested that the women in the study (802 women; 142 endorsing prior work-place sexual harassment) were dissatisfied with how the incidents were handled compared to the women who confronted the harasser themselves or to those who did nothing at all. If an organization is perceived to be ineffective or unresponsive in addressing harassment complaints, other women in the organization may also feel less inclined to report future incidents.

Identity and individual factors such as gender, experience, and self-esteem are related to reporting behavior. Women tend to report being less assertive overall compared to their male counterparts (Aoki et al., 2017; Furnham & Pendleton, 1983). A study examining negotiation scenarios suggested that acting assertively often counters female gender role expectations (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010). Results from this same study also found that women were more
concerned than men about backlash resulting from their assertive actions in the form of negative attributions and patronizing behavior.

Younger women (who have likely had less exposure to sexual harassment) and those who had little experience with overt sexual harassment were less inclined to report harassment (Barak et al., 1992). Women who have not had any exposure to these situations often have little knowledge regarding how to most effectively respond and thus have less confidence in their responses (Barak et al., 1992). Furthermore, women with lower self-esteem in general are more likely to engage in avoidance behaviors and self-blame rather than reporting harassment behavior (Malovich & Stake, 1990). Women with higher rated self-esteem are more likely to attribute blame to the perpetrator than to themselves. They are also less likely to describe a sexual harassment event as frightening, presumably because they feel capable of handling the situation (Malovich & Stake, 1990). Those with higher self-esteem often have more confidence in their responses to sexual harassment, increasing the likelihood of reporting.

**Confronting**

Confronting the perpetrator of sexual harassment is another potential response. Confrontation is considered a behavior in which the victim of sexual harassment directly requests or insists from the perpetrator that the harassment cease (Cortina & Wasti, 2005). Confrontation has been suggested to be the most assertive of potential responses to sexual harassment (Gruber, 1989; Knapp et al., 1997). Positive outcomes of confronting the harasser include a possibility for change in the perpetrator’s beliefs about their behavior or, at the very least, a change in the harasser’s future behavior towards the victim and others (Kaiser & Miller, 2004; Saunders & Senn, 2009). Bringing attention to the behavior can discourage men from
continuing harassing behavior. Confrontation has also been associated with increasing feelings of self-efficacy. Furthermore, previous research on sexism in a college setting has shown that those who confronted gender harassment were positively regarded afterwards by peers, and confrontation was associated with reductions in sexist attitudes (Boysen, 2012, 2013; Dickter et al., 2011).

Despite confrontation’s effectiveness, confrontation is used infrequently by sexual harassment victims likely due to fear of retaliation or the avoidance of potential conflict (Gadlin, 1991; Grauerholz, 1989; Gruber, 1989; Knapp et al., 1997; Saunders & Senn, 2009). For example, compared to women in low-cost situations, women in high-cost situations such as interviewing for a prestigious, highly valued job are less likely to confront sexual harassment (Saunders & Senn, 2009; Shelton & Stewart, 2004). Prior research has shown that women’s imagined responses versus actual responses to sexual harassment are significantly different (Saunders & Senn, 2009; Woodzicka & Lafrance, 2001); women on average tended to be more assertive in their imaginal responses than actual responses. This finding suggests that other factors such as emotions and context may impact the responses. In the moment, women often must decide if confronting male harassers is the best choice due to concerns about possible behavioral and emotional reactions towards the victim (Saunders & Senn, 2009).

Tomaka and colleagues (1999) found that levels of assertiveness in women were associated with subsequent appraisals of stress; the researchers attributed the difference in appraisals to self-confidence. Specifically, women who are highly assertive may feel more self-confident and be less intimidated by others, including men, and thus believe that they are able to cope effectively with situations like sexual harassment. In support, past research has suggested
that women with higher self-esteem are more likely to use confrontation than those with lower self-esteem (Gruber, 1989; Knapp et al., 1997; Malovich & Stake, 1990).

Summary of Introduction

Individuals possessing an entity mindset believe that behaviors or abilities are fixed while those possessing an incremental mindset believe that behaviors or abilities can change (Dweck, 1999). Mindset studies (Blackwell et al., 2007; Dweck, 1999; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Mangels et al., 2006; Yeager & Dweck, 2012) have demonstrated that an implicit mindset (entity vs. incremental) regarding intelligence influences behaviors and cognitions, which ultimately impacts motivation, self-esteem, and academic performance. Although the mindset framework has been applied to shyness, the literature is still developing.

Social anxiety, SAD, and shyness are related constructs that involve fear or discomfort in social situations. Applications of mindset theory to the construct of shyness has shown that for shy individuals, higher levels of shyness mindset are associated with higher levels of socially avoidant behaviors (Beer, 2002). Shyness mindset intervention studies provide evidence that shyness mindset is malleable and that promoting a growth mindset is associated with reduction in internalizing responses to a peer victimization vignette (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). Sexual harassment, another type of victimization, is a pervasive issue that is problematic on both societal and personal levels.

Shyness mindset is one construct that might negatively influence the external, more assertive responses to sexual harassment, specifically reporting and confronting. Assertiveness has been found to be negatively correlated with social anxiety (Aoki et al., 2017; Weber et al., 2004). Because social anxiety and shyness have been shown to be indistinguishable in
measurement (Anderson & Harvey, 1988), the relationship between assertiveness and shyness is presumably similar. No research has examined whether shyness mindset plays a role in response to sexual harassment. However, considering the prior finding by Valentiner and Mounts (2020) regarding internalizing responses to victimization, shyness mindset would be expected to be associated with less assertive responses to sexual harassment, such as depression, lowered self-esteem, or self-blame. Believing shyness cannot be changed, especially in situations that require social intervention to prevent their occurrence, has been found to be associated with avoidance behaviors (Beer, 2002) as previously stated. This association may be because state social anxiety is interpreted to be self-relevant and attention is turned internally. Thus, higher levels of shyness mindset may result in depression and similar internalizing responses to sexual harassment victimization, including self-blame. This idea is the focus of the current research.

This Study

This study aimed to apply the findings of Valentiner and Mounts (2020) regarding peer victimization to sexual harassment among college students. As previously stated, sexual harassment can be viewed as a specific type of victimization. What has not been studied is how shyness mindset is associated with responses to sexual harassment.

This study with female college students aimed to determine how shyness mindset relates to maladaptive internalizing responses to sexual harassment. Specifically, this study examined how social anxiety and shyness mindset moderate responses to sexual harassment and how these moderations are associated with various internalizing outcomes, specifically self-blame, decreased self-esteem, and depression and how these outcomes may relate to behaviors such as missing classes. These responses have shown to be influential in reporting and confronting
behaviors in prior studies (Gilbert & Miles, 2000; Gruber, 1989; Janoff-Bulman, 1979; Knapp et al., 1997; Malovich & Stake, 1990). Focusing on the factors that potentially influence internalizing responses can increase understanding of the mechanisms that inhibit active responses to sexual harassment.

**Hypotheses**

It was expected that shyness mindset beliefs will be related to sexual harassment responses, expanding on previous findings related to peer victimization. The following hypotheses are extensions of research conducted by Valentiner and Mounts (2020). See Figure 1 for an illustration of these hypotheses.

**Hypotheses 1-3**

After controlling for shyness mindset and social anxiety, sexual harassment victimization was expected to be positively correlated with self-blame (H1.1.1-H1.1.8), low self-esteem (H1.2.1-H1.2.8), and depression (H1.3.1-H1.3.8). Eight individual tests per outcome were conducted, one for each of the eight harassment scales. After controlling for social anxiety, shyness mindset was expected to strengthen the relationship between sexual harassment victimization and self-blame (H2.1.1-H2.1.8), low self-esteem (H2.2.1-H2.2.8), and depression (H2.3.1-H2.3.8), resulting in eight individual tests per outcome. Additionally, a three-way interaction was hypothesized among shyness mindset, social anxiety, and sexual harassment. With sexual harassment as the independent variable, the moderating role of shyness mindset was expected to be stronger at higher levels of social anxiety for self-blame (H3.1.1-H3.1.8), low
self-esteem (H3.2.1-H3.2.8), and depression (H3.3.1-H3.3.8), resulting in eight individual tests per outcome.

Hypothesis 4

Internalizing symptoms (self-blame, low self-esteem, and depression) associated with sexual harassment victimization were expected to mediate the relationship between sexual harassment victimization and class attendance, a behavioral outcome that is associated with social avoidance. Questions specifically assessed for missed class sessions related to social discomfort.
CHAPTER 2
METHODS

Participants

To achieve a 20-to-1 participant-to-predictor ratio for the regression with the greatest number of predictors, 140 participants were needed. In addition, a power analysis was conducted. An effect size of .18 was used because it was the effect size found in the Valentinier and Mounts (2020) study on peer victimization’s interaction with shyness mindset on self-worth, corresponding with this study’s second hypothesis regarding self-esteem. According to a power analysis, 124 participants were needed to maintain 90% power with a .05 error probability. The final sample included 147 female undergraduate students from college level introductory psychology courses at a large Midwestern university. These participants were recruited through an email invitation if given permission to contact through participation in a mass survey administered to all introductory psychology students. All participants were provided research credit for their participation in the study.

A large percentage of the sample was in their first (43.5%) or second year (40.8%) of college. Students ranged in age from 18-49 with an average age of 19.69 \( (SD = 2.75) \). The sample was relatively diverse in terms of racial identity (43.5% Black or African-American, 40.1% Caucasian, 21.8% Hispanic/Latina, 4.1% Asian American, and 11.6% other). The majority of participants identified as heterosexual (77.6%) and had never been married (95.2%).
Measures

**Gender Experience Questionnaire (GEQ)**

The Gender Experience Questionnaire (Leskinen & Cortina, 2014; Appendix A) is a 20-item, 5-point scale measure (1 = *never* to 5 = *many times*) that assesses the occurrence of five dimensions of gender harassment: sexist remarks, sexually crude/offensive behavior, infantilization, work/family policing, and gender policing. The GEQ is intended to estimate the occurrence of these behaviors by men targeting women in the workplace, though it is easily adaptable to a college setting. This measure assesses harassment based upon negative views of the female gender without the expectation of sexual cooperation.

The measure was developed using a series of factor analyses to determine the least problematic factors. Internal consistency was high for each of the five scales [sexist remarks ($\alpha = .93$); sexually crude/offensive behavior ($\alpha = .78$); infantilization ($\alpha = .85$); work/family policing ($\alpha = .86$); and gender policing ($\alpha = .80$)]. In this study, internal consistency was good for each of the five scales [sexist remarks ($\alpha = .95$); sexually crude/offensive behavior ($\alpha = .92$); infantilization ($\alpha = .91$); work/family policing ($\alpha = .90$); and gender policing ($\alpha = .90$)].

**Sexual Experience Questionnaire (SEQ)**

The Sexual Experience Questionnaire (Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995; Appendix A) is a 20-item measure revised from the original 28-item SEQ (Fitzgerald et al., 1988). The updated version uses a 5-point scale (1 = *Never* to 5 = *Most of the time*) that quantifies the experiences of sexual harassment across the following factors: gender harassment, sexual
bribery, and sexual coercion. Although the measure addresses gender harassment, the SEQ expands beyond the GEQ to include more severe, sex-based forms of harassment that female students might experience. In this study, internal consistency was good for each of the three scales [gender harassment (\(\alpha = .87\)); unsolicited sexual attention (\(\alpha = .91\)); sexual coercion (\(\alpha = .90\))].

**Attribution of Blame Questionnaire (ABQ)**

The Attribution of Blame Questionnaire (Brown & Testa, 2008; Appendix A) was included to assess for self-blame. Participants only completed this measure if they experienced a form of sexual or gender harassment. The measure was revised to specify that participants will be referring to an endorsed event from the GEQ and SEQ that made them the most upset. Three items for victim blame (e.g., *How responsible do you think you were for what happened?*) and three items for perpetrator blame (e.g., *To what extent is the harasser to blame for what happened?*) were included. An additional revision to the ABQ included the removal of a question in which the content was explicitly irrelevant to this study as the original intention of the ABQ was to assess blame in cases of sexual assault. Participants rated on a seven-point scale assessing how much blame the participant assigned to themselves or the perpetrator in the event referenced. Higher scores representing higher blame. High internal consistency has been shown for each subscale in prior studies (victim blame: \(\alpha = .90\) and perpetrator blame: \(\alpha = .86\); Brown & Testa, 2008); this study indicated self-blame (\(\alpha = .79\)) and other-blame (\(\alpha = .80\)) to have good internal consistency. Only the self-blame scale was used in this study.
Shyness Entity Mindset Scale (SEMS)

The original version of Shyness Mindset Scale (Beer, 2002; Appendix A) is a modification of a prior intelligence mindset scale (Hong et al., 1999). An updated scale (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020) is composed of five items and uses a six-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree to 6 = strongly agree). Low scores on the SEMS are indicative of an incremental shyness mindset, and high scores represent an entity shyness mindset. Sample items include “You will always be as shy as you are right now,” and “You can learn new things, but you can’t really change your basic shyness.” A prior study (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020) has indicated that the SEMS shows strong internal consistency (α = .93). Research on the psychometric properties of the SEMS is limited, but in this study, internal consistency was good (α = .88).

Social Interaction Anxiety Scale-Short Form (SIAS-SF)

The Social Interaction Anxiety Scale (Mattick & Clark, 1998; Appendix A) is a 20-item measure assessing general anxiety associated with social interaction. Due to the readability and length, the SIAS Short Form (SIAS-SF; Fergus et al., 2012) was developed. It consists of six items and uses a 4-point scale (1 = not at all to 5 = very extremely). This measure was used to assess social anxiety. The short form has adequate internal consistency (α = .80), strong convergent validity (r = .65) with the Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (Leary, 1983). The SIAS-SF also showed strong concurrent validity with indices of friendship quality (r = -.21) and loneliness (r = .54). The short form also correlated highly with the original SIAS (r = .93) and
does not show significant differences from the long form in corrected-item total correlations ($t(15) = 0.45, ns$). The measure demonstrated good internal consistency ($\alpha = .84$) in this study.

Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (CES-D)

The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale (Radloff, 1977; Appendix A) is a 20-item scale that uses a 5-point response scale ($0 = \text{rarely or none of the time}$ to $4 = \text{most or all of the time}$). It was developed to assess depression symptomatology in the general population and was used as a measure of feelings of depression in this study. The CES-D has high internal consistency among both clinical and non-clinical samples ($\alpha$s = .90 and .85, respectively). The measure has adequate test-retest reliability ($r = .54$) over the course of three to twelve months (Radloff, 1977). The CES-D also shows moderate discriminative validity between the general population and psychiatric inpatient groups and correlates high with other measures of depression. A later study (Herrero & Meneses, 2006) provided further support of internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$) of web-based administration of the CES-D. In this study, the CES-D demonstrated excellent internal consistency ($\alpha = .91$).

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979) was intended to assess global trait-like self-esteem (Franck et al., 2008). The RSES is a 10-item questionnaire that uses a 4-point Likert-type response scale ($1 = \text{Strongly Agree}$ to $4 = \text{Strongly Disagree}$). Internal consistency has been reported to range from .72 to .90 (Robins et al., 2001). The RSES also had high test-retest reliability ($r = .84$; Martin-Albo et al., 2007) and strong concurrent validity (Hagborg,
1993) with other self-esteem measures. In this study, the RSES maintained adequate internal consistency ($\alpha = .79$) consistent with prior studies.

**Demographics**

A short demographics form (Appendix B) was included to assess gender, age, ethnicity, income, and academic major. The questionnaire concluded with asking participants to determine how many classes they attended in the past week and how many classes they missed, as well as if absences were due to feelings of discomfort elicited by another person.

**Procedure**

Participants registered for an in-lab online study via SONA systems through the psychology department of the university. Participants completed measures in person in a private room. Only students over the age of 18 who identified as female were eligible to enroll in the study.

Participants received a detailed informed consent document describing risk associated with answering self-report measures on Qualtrics (Qualtrics, 2018), a survey measures resource. Participant responses remained anonymous. In addition, participants were informed that they will not receive any benefit from participating other than research credit and the ability to contribute to research in the field of psychology. Once participants acknowledged their understanding of these risks and benefits and agreed to continue with the study, they were presented with the SEMS and SIAS-SF first. They then completed the SEQ and GEQ in random order. Upon completion of these measures, they then received the ABQ followed by the RSES and the CES-D.
in random order. The last questionnaire collected demographic information. Other questionnaires were included for future studies following the measures intended for this study.
CHAPTER 3
RESULTS

Preliminary Analysis

For imputation of missing item data, scale construction relied upon mean imputation given that no more than 20% of the data was missing for each participant. To determine the percentage of data missing, the number of missing items were counted for each item and divided by the total number of participants. This process was repeated for all missing data items for the SIAS-SF, GEQ, SEQ, RSEQR, and the CES-D; these measures had approximately 1% missing data for each. The SMS measure had 0% missing data. For the missing items in these scales, mean imputation was used. This technique averages the item scores of available participant data for each respective item, providing possible values for missing data to create a likely estimate (Rubin, 1987). Mean imputation was not used for the ABQ. Answers to the ABQ questions were only required for those who previously experienced any forms of gender or sexual harassment as measured by the SEQ and GEQ scales. Only two participants indicated that they had never experienced any form of harassment at any point in time. Further inspection of missing items indicated that 23% of participants who experienced harassment did not answer the first ABQ item; 32% did not answer the second ABQ item; and 28.5% did not answer the third ABQ item. Only those who answered these questions were included in the analysis for self-blame. Despite this issue with the ABQ, Little’s MCAR test (Little, 1988) for this study determined that the data were missing completely at random ($p = .59$).
Reliability analyses were conducted for all measures. Reliability was deemed sufficient if Cronbach’s alpha is at least .70; all measures demonstrated adequate to excellent internal consistency. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for each scale.

Primary Analysis

Bootstrapping in SPSS with 5000 iterations was used to test the hypotheses. Compared to PROCESS (Hayes, 2017), SPSS provided a clearer dissection of the influence of each measure on the outcomes. The use of bootstrapping addressed a variety of potential statistical problems such as violations of assumptions of normality, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity (Fox, 2002). All scores for each of the variables were standardized. Hierarchical regression analysis, in which variables are entered in a specific sequence (Cohen et al., 2003), was used as the primary means of analysis. While controlling for social anxiety (SIAS-SF) and shyness mindset (SMS), each scale of harassment as a standardized score was entered as a Step 1 variable to test Hypothesis 1 for each outcome: self-blame as measured by the ABQ, depression as measured by the CES-D, and self-esteem as measured by the RSEQR. To test Hypothesis 2, the interaction between shyness mindset and each harassment scale was entered as a Step 2 variable while controlling for social anxiety, shyness mindset, and the harassment scale itself. Although not used to test stated hypotheses, the interaction between social anxiety and each harassment scale as calculated was entered as a Step 3 variable. The three-way interaction between shyness mindset, social anxiety, and the harassment scale was entered in Step 4 to test Hypothesis 3.
Table 1

*Correlations among and between outcome measures and harassment scales.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Moderators</th>
<th>SEQ Predictors</th>
<th>GEQ Predictors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-</td>
<td>Self-</td>
<td>Shyness Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Estem</td>
<td>Blame</td>
<td>GH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>-.505**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Blame</td>
<td>.250*</td>
<td>-.214*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyness Mindset</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>-.208*</td>
<td>-.222*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Anxiety</td>
<td>.443**</td>
<td>-.430**</td>
<td>-.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQ-GH</td>
<td>.382**</td>
<td>-.338**</td>
<td>.429**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQ-USA</td>
<td>.438**</td>
<td>-.277**</td>
<td>.572**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQ-SC1</td>
<td>.302**</td>
<td>-.297**</td>
<td>.638**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQ-SR</td>
<td>.330**</td>
<td>-.250**</td>
<td>.252*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQ-SC2</td>
<td>.269**</td>
<td>-.289**</td>
<td>.325**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQ-INF</td>
<td>.292**</td>
<td>-.310**</td>
<td>.243*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQ-WFP</td>
<td>.231*</td>
<td>-.205*</td>
<td>.241*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQ-GP</td>
<td>.274**</td>
<td>-.242**</td>
<td>.278**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Ns range from 92-147. *p < .05, **p < .01 SEQ = Sexual Experience Questionnaire, GEQ = Gender Experience Questionnaire, GH = Gender Harassment, USA = Unsolicited Attention, SC1 = Sexual Coercion, SR = Sexist Remarks, INF = Infantilization, WFP = Work/Family Policing, GP = Gender Policing, SC2 = Sexually Crude/Offensive Behavior.
Results using bootstrapping in PROCESS macro for SPSS using model numbers one and three (Hayes, 2017) with 5000 iterations produced nearly identical results and were used to generate tests of simple slopes and regions of significance.

The following analyses for Hypotheses 1-3 resulted in 24 individual tests for each hypothesis/type of harassment, contributing to possible experiment-wise error. To mitigate the effects of experiment-wise error, a binomial probability distribution was applied. With 24 tests and a .05 error probability rate, a minimum of four tests was needed to reach significance in order for the overall hypothesis (e.g., H1) to be supported \( p < .05 \). Analyses for Hypothesis 4 were tested for significance based on criterion that \( p < .05 \). Two-tailed tests were used across all analyses. Table 2 shows correlations across measures.

Hypotheses 1-3

_Hypothesis 1._ After controlling for social anxiety and shyness mindset, it was expected that sexual harassment victimization (operationalized using the scales of the GEQ and SEQ) would be positively associated with self-blame (H1.1.1-H1.1.8), low self-esteem (H1.2.1-H1.2.8), and depression (H1.3.1-H1.3.8). Each harassment scale was analyzed separately while controlling for social anxiety and shyness mindset. Tables 3 and 4 shows complete results including model statistics and significance. Twenty-two of the 24 tests for Hypothesis 1 were significant, reducing concerns about family-wise error for Hypothesis 1.

The SEQ gender harassment scale was a significant predictor of self-blame \( B = 1.623, p < .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.885, 2.362] \). Similar results were found for the SEQ unsolicited sexual attention scale \( B = 2.045, p < .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [1.412, 2.679] \) and for the SEQ sexual coercion scale
Table 2
Descriptive Statistics of Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Name</th>
<th># of items</th>
<th>alpha</th>
<th>Mean(SD)</th>
<th>Range Theoretical</th>
<th>Range Observed</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Experience Questionnaire:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Harassment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.868</td>
<td>9.529 (4.264)</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>1.014</td>
<td>0.781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsolicited Sexual Attention</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.908</td>
<td>10.633 (5.508)</td>
<td>6-30</td>
<td>6-30</td>
<td>1.225</td>
<td>0.744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Coercion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.904</td>
<td>6.316 (3.178)</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>3.448</td>
<td>13.674</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Experience Questionnaire:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexist Remarks</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.946</td>
<td>7.957 (4.597)</td>
<td>4-20</td>
<td>4-20</td>
<td>1.193</td>
<td>0.513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually Crude/ Offensive Behavior</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.922</td>
<td>7.932 (4.683)</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>5-25</td>
<td>1.858</td>
<td>2.947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infantilization</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>5.503 (3.313)</td>
<td>3-15</td>
<td>3-15</td>
<td>1.476</td>
<td>1.432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work/Family Policing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.896</td>
<td>6.048 (3.425)</td>
<td>4-20</td>
<td>4-20</td>
<td>2.193</td>
<td>4.805</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Policing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.900</td>
<td>6.163 (3.926)</td>
<td>4-20</td>
<td>4-20</td>
<td>2.111</td>
<td>3.538</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Predictors:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shyness Mindset</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.876</td>
<td>12.313 (3.040)</td>
<td>5-30</td>
<td>5-15</td>
<td>-0.986</td>
<td>-0.187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Anxiety</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td>13.834 (4.835)</td>
<td>6-30</td>
<td>6-27</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>-0.118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Blame</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.793</td>
<td>6.174 (4.015)</td>
<td>3-21</td>
<td>3-21</td>
<td>1.606</td>
<td>2.768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.912</td>
<td>20.331 (12.176)</td>
<td>0-80</td>
<td>2-54</td>
<td>0.706</td>
<td>-0.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.791</td>
<td>28.367 (4.770)</td>
<td>10-40</td>
<td>13-37</td>
<td>-0.514</td>
<td>0.423</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 92-147
### Table 3

Sexual Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) Scale Results for Hypotheses 1-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Blame</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Experience Questionnaire- Gender Harassment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.219**</td>
<td>0.276**</td>
<td>0.269**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.207</td>
<td>[-0.957, 0.542]</td>
<td>4.390**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.647</td>
<td>[-1.397, 0.103]</td>
<td>0.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQGH</td>
<td>1.623**</td>
<td>[0.885, 2.362]</td>
<td>3.606**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSEQGH</td>
<td>-0.221</td>
<td>[-0.822, 0.381]</td>
<td>0.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>0.202</td>
<td>[-0.433, 0.837]</td>
<td>-0.239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxSEQGH</td>
<td>-0.389</td>
<td>[-1.151, 0.374]</td>
<td>0.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASxSEQGH</td>
<td>-0.059</td>
<td>[-0.695, 0.578]</td>
<td>-0.810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual Experience Questionnaire- Unsolicited Sexual Attention</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.352**</td>
<td>0.344**</td>
<td>0.259**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.180</td>
<td>[-0.860, 0.499]</td>
<td>4.584**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.550</td>
<td>[-1.234, 0.134]</td>
<td>0.698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQUSA</td>
<td>2.045**</td>
<td>[1.412, 2.679]</td>
<td>4.785**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSEQUSA</td>
<td>-0.119</td>
<td>[-0.673, 0.436]</td>
<td>0.599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>-0.007</td>
<td>[-0.591, 0.577]</td>
<td>-0.514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxSEQUSA</td>
<td>-0.568</td>
<td>[-1.381, 0.245]</td>
<td>0.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASxSEQUSA</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>[-0.374, 0.796]</td>
<td>-1.217</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on following page)
Table 3 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Experience Questionnaire- Sexual Coercion</th>
<th>Self-Blame</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.418**</td>
<td>0.278**</td>
<td>0.292**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.023</td>
<td>5.121**</td>
<td>0.278**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.399</td>
<td>0.547</td>
<td>-0.826*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEQSC$^1$</td>
<td>2.064**</td>
<td>3.548**</td>
<td>-1.442**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.024*</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSEQSC</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>1.613*</td>
<td>0.025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.034*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>0.241</td>
<td>0.498</td>
<td>-0.533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxSEQSC</td>
<td>-0.447</td>
<td>1.051</td>
<td>-1.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASxSEQSC</td>
<td>-0.434</td>
<td>-0.018</td>
<td>-0.180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Ns range from (Self-Blame: 91-92), (Depression: 142-146), (Self-Esteem: 146-147)
*p < .05, **p < .01
SEQ = Sexual Experience Questionnaire
GH = Gender Harassment, USA = Unsolicited Sexual Attention, SC = Sexual Coercion,
1 = Tests of hypothesis 1, 2 = Tests of hypothesis 2, 3 = Tests of hypothesis 3
SIAS = Social Interaction Anxiety Scale, SMS = Shyness Mindset Scale
Table 4

Gender Experience Questionnaire (GEQ) Scale Results for Hypotheses 1-3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Blame</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Harassment Questionnaire- Sexist Remarks</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.129**</td>
<td>0.240**</td>
<td>0.218**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.163 [-0.957, 0.630]</td>
<td>4.617** [2.726, 6.508]</td>
<td>-1.765** [-2.501, -1.029]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.955* [-1.743, -0.167]</td>
<td>-0.143 [-1.953, 1.666]</td>
<td>-0.592 [-1.303, 0.119]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQSR$^1$</td>
<td>1.033** [0.310, 1.756]</td>
<td>2.711** [0.808, 4.614]</td>
<td>-0.629 [-1.357, 0.099]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2$^2$</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxGEQSR</td>
<td>-0.441 [-1.108, 0.227]</td>
<td>0.429 [-1.336, 2.195]</td>
<td>0.690* [0.011, 1.370]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>0.330 [-0.311, 0.970]</td>
<td>0.036 [-1.615, 1.688]</td>
<td>-0.293 [-0.931, 0.346]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxGEQSR</td>
<td>-0.714 [-1.429, 0.001]</td>
<td>-0.430 [-2.330, 1.470]</td>
<td>0.061 [-0.668, 0.791]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4$^3$</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.006</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASXGEQSR</td>
<td>0.415 [-0.207, 1.038]</td>
<td>-0.914 [-2.604, 0.776]</td>
<td>0.304 [-0.352, 0.959]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Gender Harassment Questionnaire- Sexually Crude/Offensive Behaviors** | | | | | | | | |
| Step 1 | 0.159** | 0.240** | 0.258** |
| SIAS | -0.056 [-0.828, 0.716] | 5.014** [3.183, 6.846] | -1.788** [-2.486, -1.091] |
| SMS | -0.885* [-1.657, -0.114] | 0.038 [-1.766, 1.843] | -0.632 [-1.323, 0.059] |
| GEQSC$^1$ | 1.219** [0.505, 1.934] | 2.601** [0.787, 4.415] | -1.134** [-1.819, -0.449] |
| Step 2$^2$ | 0.017 | 0.000 | 0.028* |
| SMSxGEQSC | -0.413 [-1.021, 0.195] | 0.140 [-1.441, 1.721] | 0.703* [0.111, 1.295] |
| Step 3 | 0.022 | 0.001 | 0.012 |
| SMSxSIAS | 0.210 [-0.440, 0.860] | -0.038 [-1.697, 1.620] | -0.207 [-0.825, 0.412] |
| SIASxGEQSC | -0.583 [-1.462, 0.295] | -0.517 [-2.814, 1.780] | -0.638 [-1.492, 0.216] |
| Step 4$^3$ | 0.021 | 0.022* | 0.014 |
| SMSxSIASXGEQSC | 0.531 [-0.168, 1.230] | -1.875* [-3.708, -0.042] | 0.577 [-0.110, 1.263] |

(Continued on following page)
Table 4 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Blame</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Harassment Questionnaire - Infantilization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.107*</td>
<td>0.250**</td>
<td>0.263**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>[-0.861, 0.732]</td>
<td>4.980**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.830*</td>
<td>[-1.625, -0.034]</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQINF</td>
<td>0.906*</td>
<td>[0.149, 1.663]</td>
<td>2.864**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>0.054*</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxGEQINF</td>
<td>-0.774*</td>
<td>[-1.421, -0.126]</td>
<td>0.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.020</td>
<td>0.022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>0.612</td>
<td>[-0.096, 1.320]</td>
<td>0.882</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxGEQINF</td>
<td>0.015</td>
<td>[-0.863, 0.894]</td>
<td>2.098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>0.027</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASxGEQINF</td>
<td>-0.588</td>
<td>[-1.277, 0.101]</td>
<td>0.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Harassment Questionnaire - Work/Family Policing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.116*</td>
<td>0.229**</td>
<td>0.223**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.065</td>
<td>[-0.857, 0.727]</td>
<td>5.155**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.924*</td>
<td>[-1.716, -0.132]</td>
<td>-0.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQWFP</td>
<td>0.984*</td>
<td>[0.227, 1.741]</td>
<td>2.287*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td>0.005</td>
<td>0.010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxGEQWFP</td>
<td>-0.544</td>
<td>[-1.139, 0.051]</td>
<td>0.748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.080*</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>0.158</td>
<td>[-0.483, 0.799]</td>
<td>0.211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxGEQWFP</td>
<td>-1.022**</td>
<td>[-1.745, -0.299]</td>
<td>-0.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASxGEQWFP</td>
<td>-0.170</td>
<td>[-1.086, 0.745]</td>
<td>-0.638</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Continued on following page)
Table 4 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Harassment Questionnaire- Gender Policing</th>
<th>Self-Blame</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Self-Esteem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$\Delta R^2$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>95% CI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>0.126**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIAS</td>
<td>-0.054</td>
<td>-0.842, 0.733</td>
<td>5.086**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMS</td>
<td>-0.842*</td>
<td>[-1.629, -0.056]</td>
<td>0.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEQGP(^1)</td>
<td>1.000**</td>
<td>[0.284, 1.716]</td>
<td>2.891**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>0.038*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxGEQGP</td>
<td>-0.619*</td>
<td>[-1.234, -0.003]</td>
<td>0.235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 3</td>
<td>0.084*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIAS</td>
<td>0.107</td>
<td>[-0.563, 0.776]</td>
<td>0.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIASxGEQGP</td>
<td>-1.048**</td>
<td>[-1.816, -0.280]</td>
<td>-0.525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 4(^3)</td>
<td>0.032</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMSxSIASxGEQGP</td>
<td>-0.839</td>
<td>[-1.701, 0.023]</td>
<td>-1.698</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Ns range from (Self-Blame: 91-92), (Depression: 142-146), (Self-Esteem: 146-147)

*p < .05, **p < .01

GEQ = Gender Experience Questionnaire

1 = Tests of hypothesis 1, 2 = Tests of hypothesis 2, 3 = Tests of hypothesis

SR = Sexist Remarks, SC = Sexually Crude/Offensive Behavior, INF = Infantilization, WFP = Work/Family Policing, GP = Gender Policing

SIAS = Social Interaction Anxiety Scale, SMS = Shyness Mindset Scale
for self-blame ($B = 2.064, p < .01, 95\% CI [1.514, 2.613]$). The GEQ sexist remarks ($B = 1.033, p < .01, 95\% CI [0.310, 1.756]$), the GEQ sexually crude/offensive behaviors scale ($B = 1.219, p < .01, 95\% CI [0.505, 1.934]$), GEQ infantilization scale ($B = 0.906, p < .024, 95\% CI [0.149, 1.663]$), the GEQ work-family policing scale ($B = 0.984, p < .024, 95\% CI [0.227, 1.741]$), and the GEQ gender policing scale ($B = 1.000, p < .01, 95\% CI [0.284, 1.716]$) were also positively associated with self-blame.

The SEQ gender harassment scale was a significant predictor of depression ($B = 3.606, p < .01, 95\% CI [1.786, 5.426]$). Similar results were found for the SEQ unsolicited sexual attention scale ($B = 4.785, p < .01, 95\% CI [3.088, 6.483]$) and for the SEQ sexual coercion scale ($B = 3.548, p < .01, 95\% CI [1.774, 5.21]$) for depression. The GEQ sexist remarks scale ($B = 2.711, p < .01, 95\% CI [0.808, 4.614]$), the GEQ sexually crude/offensive behaviors scale ($B = 2.601, p < .01, 95\% CI [0.787, 4.415]$), the GEQ infantilization scale ($B = 2.864, p < .01, 95\% CI [1.074, 4.654]$), the GEQ work/family policing scale ($B = 2.287, p = .016, 95\% CI [0.441, 4.133]$), and the GEQ gender policing scale ($B = 2.891, p < .01, 95\% CI [1.077, 4.706]$) were also positively associated with depression.

The SEQ gender harassment scale was a significant predictor of self-esteem ($B = -1.284, p < .01, 95\% CI [-1.985, -0.584]$). Similar results were found for the SEQ unsolicited sexual attention scale ($B = -1.156, p < .01, 95\% CI [-1.848, -0.465]$) and for the SEQ sexual coercion scale ($B = -1.442, p < .01, 95\% CI [-2.112, -0.772]$). The GEQ sexually crude/offensive behaviors scale ($B = -1.134, p < .01, 95\% CI [-1.819, -0.449]$), the GEQ infantilization scale ($B = -1.190, p < .01, 95\% CI [-1.875, -0.506]$), and the GEQ gender policing scale ($B = -0.970, p < .01, 95\% CI [-1.659, -0.281]$) were also negatively associated with self-esteem. The GEQ
work/family policing scale ($B = -0.700, p = .051, 95\% CI [-1.403, 0.003]$) was marginally significant. The GEQ sexist remarks scale was not significantly associated with self-esteem.

Hypothesis 2

A moderation analysis using SPSS with bootstrapping was applied to test shyness mindset’s effects on the relationship between sexual harassment victimization and each of the outcomes of self-blame (H2.1.1-H2.1.8), low self-esteem (H2.2.1-H2.2.8), and feelings of depression (H2.3.1-H2.3.8). Each scale of the GEQ and SEQ was analyzed independently, and a binomial probably distribution requiring four significant tests was applied to evaluate whether the overall Hypothesis (H2) was supported. The following results are from Step 2 of a hierarchical regression analysis for which five of the 24 statistical tests were significant. See Tables 3 and 4 (Appendix A) for complete results.

Shyness mindset showed a significant interaction with the GEQ infantilization scale on self-blame ($B = -0.774, p < .05, 95\% CI [-1.421, -0.126]$). To explore the significant two-way interaction between shyness mindset and infantilization, simple slopes tests were conducted. High levels of infantilization at lower levels of shyness mindset was significantly associated with high levels of self-blame. The regions of significance test indicated significant differences between the regression lines for low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) shyness mindset at standardized values of infantilization equal or less than 0.008 standard deviations above the mean, representing about 33.3\% of the distribution representing the highest levels of infantilization (Figure 3).
Note: $N = 91$. *$p < .05$.

Figure 3. Interaction of shyness mindset and infantilization on self-blame.

Similar results were found for the interaction of shyness mindset and the GEQ gender-policing scale for predicting self-blame ($B = -0.619$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [-1.234, -0.003]). At lower levels of shyness mindset, gender policing was significantly associated with high levels of self-blame. The regions of significance test indicated significant differences between the regression lines for low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) shyness mindset at standardized values of gender policing equal or less than 0.069 standard deviations above the mean, representing about 23.8% of the distribution representing the highest levels of gender policing (Figure 4).
Shyness mindset showed a significant interaction with the SEQ sexual coercion scale for predicting depression ($B = 1.613$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.135, 3.091]). At lower levels of shyness mindset, greater reports of sexual coercion were significantly associated with high levels of depression. However, at high levels of shyness mindset, sexual coercion was more strongly associated with high levels of depression. The regions of significance test indicated significant differences between the regression lines for low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) shyness mindset at standardized values of sexual coercion equal or less than 1.808 standard deviations above the

Note: $N = 91$, *$p < .05$

Figure 4. Interaction of shyness mindset and gender policing on self-blame.
mean, representing about 4.1% of the distribution representing the highest levels of sexual coercion (Figure 5).

![Graph showing interaction of shyness mindset and sexual coercion on depression.

Note: $N = 145$, *$p < .05$

Figure 5. Interaction of shyness mindset and sexual coercion on depression.

After controlling for social anxiety, shyness mindset showed a significant interaction with the GEQ sexually crude/offensive behaviors scale on self-esteem ($B = 0.703, p < .05$, 95% CI [0.111, 1.295]). At lower levels of shyness mindset, sexually crude/offensive behavior was significantly associated with low levels of self-esteem. The regions of significance test indicated
significant differences between the regression lines for low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) shyness mindset at standardized values of sexually crude/offensive behaviors equal or less than 0.072 standard deviations below the mean, representing about 32% of the distribution representing the highest levels of sexually crude/offensive behaviors (Figure 6).

Note: $N = 146$, *$p < .05$

Figure 6. Interaction of shyness mindset and sexually crude/offensive behaviors on self-esteem. Similar results were found for the interaction of shyness mindset and the GEQ sexist remarks scale for predicting self-esteem ($B = 0.690$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.011, 1.370]). At lower levels of shyness mindset, sexist remarks were significantly associated with lower levels self-esteem. The regions of significance test indicated significant differences between the regression lines for low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) shyness mindset at standardized values of sexist remarks.
equal or less than 0.324 standard deviations below the mean, representing about 51% of the
distribution representing the highest levels of sexist remarks (Figure 7).

Note: $N = 146$, *$p < .05$

Figure 7. Interaction of shyness mindset and sexist remarks on self-esteem.

No other interactions between shyness mindset and harassment indices were significant.

It was predicted that shyness mindset would increase the positive association between each
sexual harassment scale and self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem. Although significant,
the results for Hypothesis 2 are not in the expected direction. Even though these results do not
support the stated hypothesis, the impact of shyness mindset has implications in the relationship
between sexual harassment and internalizing outcomes.
Social Anxiety and Sexual Harassment

Although not an explicitly stated hypothesis, there was an expectation that social anxiety might moderate the relationship between sexual harassment and self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem. There was one significant interaction between social anxiety and the GEQ gender policing scale on self-blame ($B = -1.682, p < .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [-2.681, -0.684]$). At lower levels of social anxiety, gender policing was significantly associated with high levels of self-blame. The regions of significance test indicated significant differences between the regression lines for low (-1 SD) and high (+1 SD) shyness mindset at standardized values of infantilization equal or less than 2.432 standard deviations above the mean, representing about 6.8\% of the distribution representing the highest levels of infantilization (Figure 8).

Step 3 indicated a significant interaction between social anxiety and the GEQ work-family scale policing on self-blame ($B = -1.022 p < .01, 95\% \text{ CI } [-1.745, -0.299]$). This result was not maintained when controlling for additional interactions.

Hypothesis 3

A moderation analysis using SPSS with 5000 bootstraps was used to analyze a moderated moderation model for each GEQ and SEQ scale. In this three-way interaction, shyness mindset was expected to moderate the relationships between sexual harassment (independent variable) and self-blame, low self-esteem, and feelings of depression (dependent variables) with social anxiety acting as a moderator on shyness mindset (H3.1.1-H3.3.8). Each scale of the GEQ and SEQ was analyzed independently, and a binomial probability distribution requiring four
Figure 8. Interaction of social anxiety and gender policing on self-blame.

significant tests was applied to evaluate whether the overall hypothesis (H3) was supported. Only one of the 24 tests conducted was significant. The three-way interaction of the GEQ sexually crude/offensive behaviors scale, shyness mindset, and social anxiety was negatively associated with depression ($B = -1.875, p = .045, 95\% CI [-3.708, -0.042]$). Less than four tests were significant, and thus, Hypothesis 3 was not supported by these results. See Tables 3 and 4 for complete results.
Hypothesis 4

Mediation analyses using PROCESS model 4 (Hayes, 2017) were used to determine if self-blame, depression, or low self-esteem mediated the relationship between sexual harassment (independent variable) and if classes were missed due to feeling uncomfortable (dependent variable). Two groups were created in which one consisted of those who endorsed having missed class in the past week [due to feeling uncomfortable] and the other consisted of those who did not; this dichotomous variable allowed for logistic regression analysis within PROCESS. In this analysis, the eight scales from the SEQ and GEQ were combined to generate a general harassment scale score (intercorrelation median = .530, range = .296 to .787). Each mediator (self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem) was tested independently. Social anxiety and shyness mindset were entered as covariates in PROCESS.

The first analysis considered missed courses within the last week as the outcome. Seven participants reported having missed classes. A mediation analysis using PROCESS model 4 (Hayes, 2017) was conducted. Self-blame was entered as a mediator (Figure 9). The model was not significant and each of the betas, including the test for an indirect effect, were not significant.

With depression functioning as a mediator (Figure 10), the model for depression was significant (McFadden = 0.209, p = 0.020) and depression was a significant predictor (B = 0.094, p = 0.014). No other individual predictors, including the test for an indirect effect, were significant.

When self-esteem acted as a mediator (Figure 11) between harassment and missed classes within the last week, the model was not significant and each of the betas, including the test for an indirect effect, were not significant.
Indirect Effect: Harassment $\rightarrow$ Self-Blame $\rightarrow$ Missed Classes Past Week  $b = -0.006$, 95% CI [-0.080, 0.020]

Note: $N = 92$, $^*p < .01$. Covariates (social anxiety and shyness mindset) not shown. McFadden Value = 0.127 ($p = 0.295$).

Figure 9. Results of PROCESS Model 4 testing self-blame as a mediator on harassment and missed classes (past week).

Indirect Effect: Harassment $\rightarrow$ Depression $\rightarrow$ Missed Classes Past Week  $b = 0.016$, 95% CI [-0.012, 0.122]

Note: $N = 142$, $^*p < .05$ $^*^*p < .01$. Covariates (social anxiety and shyness mindset) not shown. McFadden Value = 0.209 ($p = 0.020$).

Figure 10. Results of PROCESS Model 4 testing depression as a mediator on harassment and missed classes (past week).
Indirect Effect: Harassment $\rightarrow$ Self-Esteem $\rightarrow$ Missed Classes Past Week  $\quad b = 0.006$, 95% CI [-0.009, 0.026]

Note: $N = 147$, *$p < .01$. Covariates (social anxiety and shyness mindset) not shown. McFadden Value = 0.108 ($p = 0.192$).

Figure 11. Results of PROCESS Model 4 testing self-esteem as a mediator on harassment and missed classes (past week).

The second analysis considered if the participant ever missed classes due to someone making them feel uncomfortable. Twenty-three of the participants indicated this experience. Self-blame was entered as a mediator (Figure 12). The model was not significant and each of the betas, including the test for an indirect effect, were not significant.

The model for depression was significant (McFadden = 0.090, $p = 0.024$). Each of the betas were not found to be significant. Depression was found to account for significant variance in the relationship between harassment and missed classes ever (Figure 13).

Self-esteem was entered as a mediator (Figure 14). The model was not significant and each of the betas, including the test for an indirect effect, were not significant.
Indirect Effect: Harassment $\rightarrow$ Self-Blame $\rightarrow$ Missed Classes Ever \hspace{0.5cm} b = 0.002, 95% CI [-0.011, 0.019]

Note: \( N = 92, *p < .01 \). Covariates (social anxiety and shyness mindset) not shown. McFadden Value = 0.040 \((p = 0.496)\).

Figure 12. Results of PROCESS Model 4 testing self-blame as a mediator on harassment and missed classes (ever).

Significant Indirect Effect: Harassment $\rightarrow$ Depression $\rightarrow$ Missed Classes Ever \hspace{0.5cm} b = 0.007, 95% CI [0.001, 0.018]

Note: \( N = 142, *p < .01 \). Covariates (social anxiety and shyness mindset) not shown. McFadden Value = 0.090 \((p = 0.024)\).

Figure 13. Results of PROCESS Model 4 testing depression as a mediator on harassment and missed classes (ever).
Indirect Effect: Harassment → Self-Esteem → Missed Classes Ever  $b = 0.004$, 95% CI [-0.003, 0.011]

Note: $N = 147$, *$p < .01$. Covariates (social anxiety and shyness mindset) not shown. McFadden Value = 0.065 ($p = 0.081$).

Figure 14. Results of PROCESS Model 4 testing self-esteem as a mediator on harassment and missed classes (ever).
CHAPTER 4
DISCUSSION

This study examined the moderating role of shyness mindset in the relationships of sexual and gender harassment with specific internalizing experiences (i.e., self-blame, depression, and self-esteem), as well as to investigate whether specific internalizing experiences mediated the relationship of experiencing sexual and gender harassment with a negative behavioral outcome (i.e., missing class).

The internalizing experiences examined in this study (i.e., self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem) are important to consider because they are thought to potentially impede reporting and confronting behaviors, which are considered adaptive responses to sexual and gender harassment on an individual level (Gruber, 1989; Knapp et al, 1997; Malovich & Stake, 1990). Confrontation, which has been shown to increase feelings of self-efficacy, is considered to be particularly adaptive (Kaiser & Miller, 2004; Saunders & Senn, 2009).

The first set of analyses was conducted with the goal of confirming a relationship between eight different experiences of sexual and gender harassment with each of the three internalizing outcomes (i.e., self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem) using data from a sample of female college students. Results supported these expectations.

The second aim of the study was to determine whether and how shyness mindset moderates the relationship of sexual and gender harassment with each internalizing outcome. Based on a prior study (e.g., Valentiner & Mounts, 2020), shyness mindset was expected to
moderate these relationships, strengthening the association of sexual and gender harassment with self-blame, depression, and self-esteem. The results for depression were consistent with previous findings observed in Valentiner and Mounts (2020) in the case of sexual coercion, such that the relationship between sexual coercion and depression was stronger at high levels shyness mindset than at low levels of shyness mindset. For the relationships of certain types of harassment with certain internalizing outcomes (i.e., infantilization and gender policing in the case of self-blame, and sexually crude/offensive behaviors and sexist remarks in the case of self-esteem), the interaction of sexual and gender harassment with shyness mindset was also confirmed. However, the direction of the significant interaction was opposite to the hypothesized direction; the stronger relationships between harassment and internalizing outcomes were expected at high levels of shyness mindset but were observed at low levels of shyness mindset.

Moderation by social anxiety on the interaction between shyness mindset and sexual/gender harassment on internalizing behaviors were also examined. Based on previous literature (e.g., Siegel et al., 2009) that has indicated social anxiety as a contributing factor to victimization, higher levels of social anxiety were expected to strengthen associations of the interaction between sexual/gender harassment and shyness mindset. However, the results of this study failed to confirm this three-way interaction hypothesis.

The final aim was to determine how each internalizing outcome (self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem) may mediate the association of harassment (encompassing both sexual and gender harassment) with a behavioral outcome (i.e., missing classes as a result of feeling uncomfortable). There was evidence confirming depression as a mediator in the relationship between harassment and classes missed. The null results for missing classes in the past week appear to be due to limited variability in the indices of behavior outcomes.
Descriptives

SEQ Results. This study’s mean SEQ scores were compared to prior studies’ scores. One of the prior studies that used the SEQ assessed samples of university employees. When combining scales from the SEQ, the sample from this study had an overall mean of 26.569. Using a pooled standard deviation, the mean of this study’s sample was over two standard deviations above the mean of the sample from the study conducted by Glomb and colleagues (1999). In a study that assessed college female students (Gram, 2005), similar results were found; the mean of this study’s sample was just over one standard deviation above the Gram study’s mean. These findings indicate that the female college students from this sample reported higher levels of sexual harassment compared to prior samples.

Baker et al. (1990) found that 42-90% of both female and male college students experienced sexual harassment, suggesting that sexual harassment is an issue that goes beyond the workplace. In the current sample, only 9.5% reported never experiencing any form of sexual harassment measured by the SEQ, leaving over 90% of the current sample having experienced some form of sexual harassment within the last year in a school setting, comparable to the findings by Baker and colleagues (1990). Approximately 13% of participants reported experiencing a form of sexual harassment measured by the SEQ “many times.” Based on the results of Baker et al. (1990), Gram (2005), and Glomb et al. (1999), along with this study’s data, female college students appear to be significantly at risk for experiencing sexual harassment.
GEQ Results

This study’s mean GEQ scores were compared to prior studies’ scores. One prior study that used the GEQ assessed a sample of working women (Leskinen & Cortina, 2014) and another assessed female college students (Muldoon, 2015). Both studies found similar means to each other across the five scales. These means were comparable to the means of the scales in this study with one exception- this study demonstrated higher values of sexually crude/offensive behaviors.

In addition, in this study’s sample, approximately 20.4% of participants reported experiencing some form of gender harassment “many times.” Approximately 19.7% of participants reported never experiencing any form of gender harassment. These findings indicate that 80.3% of the sample has experienced some form of gender harassment in a school setting. Results from this study and Muldoon (2015) indicate that female college students encounter similar experiences of gender harassment compared to female workers.

Summary and Implications

Overall, findings from this study indicate that participants reported experiencing more instances of sexual harassment and comparable levels of gender harassment compared to prior samples. The vast majority of the sample endorsed having had the experience of sexual or gender harassment at least once in a school setting. Self-reported self-esteem and depression levels in the current sample were comparable to college student samples found in the literature (Dennhardt & Murphy, 2011; Holland, 2016; Rottinghaus et al., 2009), so differences in these domains do not account for the higher levels of self-reported sexual harassment experiences. It is
important to note that this study was conducted in the midst of the #MeToo movement. Since the movement began, internet searches for sexual harassment and associated behaviors such as reporting and training have increased by over 80% (Caputi et al., 2018). Furthermore, ostracism of harassment targets in the workplace has decreased after the movement began (Brown & Battle, 2019). Perhaps the higher means in this study, specifically as they relate to specific experiences of sexual harassment measured by the SEQ, are due to a recent decrease in stigmatization of sexual harassment victimization and increase in education and awareness of what constitutes sexual and gender harassment.

**Sexual Harassment and Internalizing Experiences**

Prior studies have established relationships between sexual and gender harassment and the outcome variables assessed in this study (Chan et al., 2008, Glomb et al., 1999; Harned & Fitzgerald, 2002). As a result, it was expected that each harassment scale from the SEQ and GEQ would be positively associated with self-blame and depression, and would be negatively associated with self-esteem. This expectation was supported by the data with the exception of the null result found between sexist remarks and self-esteem and work-family policing self-esteem. This study examined each individual scale of harassment and its association with self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem, which to our knowledge, has not been previously examined. Future research could examine unique contributions of each dimension of sexual and gender harassment.
Entity Shyness Mindset’s Unique Associations

Conceptualizing sexual harassment as a form of victimization, it was hypothesized that shyness mindset would moderate the relationships of sexual and gender harassment with each of the outcomes (i.e., self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem), similar to findings from the Valentiner and Mounts (2020) study on adolescent peer victimization. Results indicated five significant tests out of the twenty-four tests conducted for Hypothesis 2, a result that is not likely to be due to chance ($p < .006$). However, not all of the interactions were in the hypothesized direction.

Results confirmed that shyness mindset moderated the relationship between infantilization (as measured by the GEQ) and self-blame. In particular, there was a significant relationship at low levels of shyness mindset, but not at high levels of shyness mindset, as illustrated in Figure 3. Infantilization has been shown to have negative effects on confidence in women (MacArthur, 2015) and is an example of gender stereotyping that can affect workplace performance (Leskin & Cortina, 2014). To our knowledge, infantilization specifically has not been studied as it relates to feelings of self-blame. Our interpretation of this study’s finding is that low shyness mindset might create a vulnerability. Perhaps one benefit of having a fixed shyness mindset is that sexual and gender harassment does not lead to self-blame. It may be that those with a growth mindset may feel that they could have done more to prevent infantilization directed towards them, especially for future interactions. Prior research has indicated that in cases of sexual harassment, control over future harassment was positively associated with self-blame (Larsen & Fitzgerald, 2011). Additionally, self-blame was also positively associated with
PTSD symptoms in the same study. Further research would need to be conducted to determine how self-blame relates to future prevention behaviors such as reporting and confronting.

A similar pattern of results occurred when examining shyness mindset acting as a moderator of the relationship between gender policing, as measured by the GEQ, and self-blame (see Figure 4). Again, at low levels of shyness mindset, gender policing was significantly associated with self-blame, but there was no significant association between gender policing and self-blame at high levels of shyness mindset. Gender policing may arise as female students (and workers) need to engage in stereotyped “masculine” behaviors to achieve success, with increased risk of being targeted for sexual and gender harassment as a result of these behaviors (Leskinen et al., 2015). The same phenomenon seen with infantilization may be occurring in which those with low shyness mindset might be more likely to blame themselves as they feel that they could act differently in these situations moving forward. There is little research on gender policing as it relates to self-blame, so continued research would be needed to examine this possibility.

Study findings also indicated that shyness mindset moderates the relationship between sexual coercion and depression, and the relationship was significant at both high and low levels of shyness mindset, as illustrated in Figure 5. This pattern of results is consistent with previous findings (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020) which will be discussed further below.

The relationship between sexually crude/offensive behaviors, as measured by the GEQ, and self-esteem was also moderated by shyness mindset. There was a significant relationship at low levels of shyness mindset, but not at high levels of shyness mindset, as illustrated in Figure 6. A similar pattern of results occurred when examining moderation of the relationship between sexist remarks, as measured by the GEQ, and self-esteem by shyness mindset (see Figure 7). Thus, at low levels of shyness mindset, sexist remarks shared a significant negative association
with self-esteem, but there was no significant association between sexist remarks and self-esteem at high levels of shyness mindset. Again, it is possible that those with low shyness mindset may be vulnerable to decreases in self-esteem as exposure to sexual and gender harassment increases. Those with growth shyness mindset may believe that they could act differently in social situations, and that maybe it is something about their own person and behavior that brought about the harassment. Those with high shyness mindset appear to have low self-esteem regardless of the presence of sexist remarks and sexually crude/offensive behavior. The results of this study suggest a vulnerability in low shyness mindset not previously considered.

The findings from this study concerning depression are consistent with findings from another study related to shyness mindset and victimization (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). The Valentiner and Mounts findings suggest that peer victimization was more strongly associated with depression in the context of higher shyness mindset. In this study, although high levels of sexual coercion are related to depression at high and low levels of shyness mindset, sexual coercion had a stronger association with depression at higher levels of shyness mindset.

Self-esteem did not demonstrate the same pattern. In the prior study conducted by Valentiner and Mounts (2020), shyness mindset was marginally significant as a moderator of the relationship between peer victimization and self-esteem, and produced a similar pattern of results for depression. This study’s findings differ from prior findings in that higher levels of sexual and gender harassment were associated with lower self-esteem in the context of low shyness mindset. It is important to note that those with low shyness mindset and experiences of sexual and gender harassment had comparable self-esteem to those with high shyness mindset with and without the presence of sexual and gender harassment. Results indicate that in the absence of sexual and gender harassment, those with low shyness mindset might have high self-esteem, yet having this
mindset creates a vulnerability. It may also be that, unlike peer victimization in the Valentiner and Mounts (2020) study, sexually crude/offensive behaviors (for example) may not be perceived as wholly negative in that there may be an element of communicating attraction despite being simultaneously disrespectful.

Concerning results related to self-blame, exposure to sexual and gender harassment for those with a low shyness mindset may trigger feelings of self-blame, which could also be related to experiencing lower self-esteem. As noted above, at low levels of sexual and gender harassment, lower levels of shyness mindset may carry the benefit of higher self-esteem. At low levels of shyness mindset, sexual and gender harassment may lead to self-blame and eliminate the self-esteem benefit seen in the absence of sexual and gender harassment. Although the literature generally considers incremental mindset across various domains as more desirable than an entity mindset, there appears to be disadvantages to having incremental shyness mindset regarding self-blame and no advantages regarding self-esteem in the context of sexual and gender harassment.

There may be another explanation as to why the moderation results for depression performed as expected but those for self-blame and self-esteem did not. According to Beck (1967, 2002), depression is associated with negative cognitive biases, including low self-esteem and self-blame (Abramson & Sackheim, 1977). There are other components of depression aside from negative cognitions including behavior such as avoidance and rumination (Martell et al., 2001; Moulds et al., 2007). In this study, the high shyness mindset part of the distribution may be more strongly associated with rumination and avoidance behaviors that cannot be captured by self-esteem and self-blame. There was evidence from the Hypothesis 4 analysis that indicated that depression facilitates class avoidance, which was not found for self-blame and self-esteem as
mediators. These findings suggest there is something different about depression compared to self-esteem and self-blame that may be accounting for the differing results. Rumination was not assessed in this study and future research could examine the impact rumination may have on these associations.

These results and their interpretation may also be impacted by measurement. In this study, the SEMS scale consists of questions worded to assess for high shyness mindset only. High scores indicate entity mindset, and low scores imply an incremental mindset. However, it is possible that low scores on an entity mindset measure do not automatically mean incremental shyness mindset. Figures 3-7 may show low entity shyness mindset’s (rather than high incremental shyness mindset) moderating role on sexual harassment. Future studies may consider the use of an incremental shyness mindset measure in addition to the entity shyness mindset measure to differentiate the role of these mindset beliefs. However, in prior studies, growth-worded items tend not to predict outcomes (Valentiner & Mounts, 2020). Based on that prior finding, this study utilized only the entity shyness mindset scale. With this consideration in mind, it is possible that the conceptualization of incremental shyness mindset is faulty since this construct is being measured through an entity shyness mindset scale. A measure of incremental shyness mindset could be included in future research.

Although not an explicit hypothesis, the impact of social anxiety as a moderator was assessed as part of the statistical model. Referring to Hypothesis 1, higher levels of gender policing, as measured by the GEQ, was associated with higher levels of self-blame. When considering social anxiety as a moderator, there was a significant relationship at low levels of social anxiety, but not at high levels of social anxiety, as illustrated by Figure 8. Because shyness and social anxiety are related constructs, it was also expected that individuals with higher levels
of social anxiety would experience more self-blame in response to sexual harassment. Results indicated that there was not a significant difference in reported self-blame at high or low levels of gender policing at high levels of social anxiety. However, these interactions do not account for experiment-wise error and may reflect chance.

In this study, social anxiety had significant correlations with the SEQ gender harassment scale \((r = .238)\) and the GEQ sexist remarks scale \((r = .281;\) see Table 1). No other significant correlations were found between social anxiety and the remaining six scales assessed. These findings may reflect reverse causality in which experiences of harassment lead to development of social anxiety. Since this study is cross-sectional, it is not possible to determine causation. Furthermore, given the unexpected results of this study as they pertain to Hypothesis 2, the results should be confirmed using a separate sample.

**Social Anxiety Does Not Significantly Impact Shyness Mindset’s Effect**

It was expected that social anxiety would moderate the interaction between shyness mindset and sexual harassment across all outcomes (self-blame, depression, low self-esteem). One significant result was found. When social anxiety moderated the interaction between shyness mindset and sexually crude/offensive behaviors, as measured by the GEQ, the highest levels of depression were observed at high levels of social anxiety. This association occurred at low levels of shyness mindset and high levels of sexually crude/offensive behaviors. The lowest levels of depression were observed at low levels of social anxiety with high levels of shyness mindset and low levels of sexually crude/offensive behaviors. This result is not in the hypothesized direction. Because less than four tests of the 24 conducted for Hypothesis 3 yielded significant findings, this one significant finding likely reflects chance.
Behavioral Outcomes

The final aim of the study focused on the relationship between sexual harassment and missed classes due to feeling uncomfortable. It was expected that self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem would each separately mediate the relationship between harassment and class attendance. No significant mediations were found for classes missed in the past week. Only the model for depression was significant. It is notable that only seven participants indicated that they had missed class within the past week [due to feeling uncomfortable], which significantly underpowered the analysis.

This study also assessed classes missed historically. Depression was indicated as a mediator in the relationship between sexual harassment and classes missed ever (see Figure 13). The literature has established an association between sexual harassment experiences and feelings of depression (Chan et al., 2008, Glomb et al., 1999; Harned & Fitzgerald, 2002). Depression is associated with withdrawal from activities (Lewinsohn, 1974) and has been associated with academic impairment, including missing classes (Heiligenstein et al., 1996). Considering these prior findings in conjunction with this study’s findings, experiences of sexual harassment likely elicits depression, which leads to class avoidance. The study assessed missing class due to feeling uncomfortable. This relationship may be stronger when the perpetrator is in that class. Due to the study design, causation cannot be definitively concluded.

Sexual harassment does occur on college campuses (Baker et al., 1990) and appears to lead to behavioral outcomes that might have long-term academic effects. Further research should be conducted with a larger sample to replicate these findings.
Implications and Limitations

Sexual harassment, as previously stated, is a common problem (Aggarwal & Gupta, 2000; Fitzgerald et al., 1988; USMSPB, 1988; Willness et al., 2007). There are specific strategies for responding to sexual and gender harassment that are considered adaptive for the victim (Gruber, 1989; Knapp et al., 1997; Malovich & Stake, 1990) such as reporting and (safely) confronting sexual harassment (Boysen, 2012, 2013; Dickter et al., 2011; Gruber, 1989; Kaiser & Miller, 2004; Knapp et al., 1997; Malovich & Stake, 1990; Saunders & Senn, 2009). The goal of these adaptive responses is to reduce the incidence of sexual and gender harassment, and prevent internalizing responses. The current findings are consistent with the previous literature regarding the internalizing experiences associated with sexual harassment, as findings established positive relationships between sexual and gender harassment and all three internalizing outcomes (self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem). In light of the high incidence of self-reported harassment experiences and the significant associations between those experiences and internalizing outcomes, there is a need for a better understanding of what contributes to these outcomes.

Understanding sexual and gender harassment’s association with internalizing responses in the context of shyness mindset would potentially lead to development of interventions aimed at increasing assertive behaviors and decreasing internalizing responses related to sexual and gender harassment. The findings from this study suggest that there may be advantages and disadvantages to having an incremental shyness mindset. Although prior research findings in other areas (Dweck, 1999; Valentiner & Mounts, 2020; Valentiner et al., 2013; Yeager et al., 2013) demonstrate that incremental shyness mindset is associated with more positive outcomes,
this study’s results suggest that incremental (or low) shyness mindset may not be beneficial for self-esteem and self-blame when in a sexual/gender harassment context. Developing an intervention to encourage incremental shyness mindset in the context of sexual/gender harassment would suggest that reported depression may decrease yet reported self-blame and low self-esteem would increase. It is possible that depression has unique components associated with high shyness mindset that are not present in self-blame or low self-esteem, which may explain the differing pattern of results regarding both shyness mindset and class attendance.

Overall, findings from this study indicate high incidence rates of sexual and gender harassment and negative internalizing outcomes associated with sexual and gender harassment. Furthermore, shyness mindset seems to have a moderating role on the relationship of sexual and gender harassment with the internalizing outcomes. Depression specifically has a relationship with class attendance. According to research by Nelson, Halpert, and Cellar (2007), strict interventions that occur at the organizational level are positively associated with effectiveness in combating harassment. An organizational intervention could address the incidence rates as well as provide an atmosphere that discourages harassment. An additional strategy might be to provide support to victims when harassment occurs, addressing both proactive and reaction measures for prevention. Furthermore, an intervention strategy at an individual level may also be helpful. If the victim of the transgression also possesses beliefs about harassment that decrease the likelihood of engagement in adaptive behaviors, an intervention that targets this particular mindset could be useful. The intervention could promote both adaptive behavioral changes as well as culture change within the organization. However, because there are advantages and disadvantages to incremental shyness mindset based on this study, further research into the role of shyness mindset seems warranted.
A major limitation of this study was the reliance on self-reported survey data. Common method variance often inflates correlations (Lindell & Whitney, 2001). It may be useful in future research to consider the use of other methods (e.g., vignettes) to reduce common method variance. Another limitation involves the study’s sample. The study’s results may not be generalizable to students in other universities and may also not be generalizable to non-students and other genders. Cohort effects are also possible since participants were generally between the ages of 18 and 23 during the study period (fall of 2019). As previously stated, the study collected data during the height of the #MeToo movement, which may have increased interest in participation in the study for specific students as the topic of the study was apparent to registrants. If so, these students may have self-selected into the study. The exposure to this movement may have also influenced responses as a direct result of increased awareness of what constitutes sexual harassment. Furthermore, this study’s small sample size underpowered the mediation analyses related to as only seven participants reported having missed class in the past week.

Finally, this study has limitations that result from the measures used. Prior psychometric research on the GEQ and SEEMS is limited. Modifications to the ABQ have not been piloted before, and the ABQ only assessed self-blame specifically related to the one most upsetting incident from the SEQ or GEQ, which may have impacted answers as some experiences of harassment may have led to more or less self-blame than others. This study did not consider the effects of other blame from the ABQ. The ABQ also had a larger percentage of missing data compared to the other measures used in this study. It is possible that the survey design influenced answers in that the ABQ used a “slider” rather than a radio button (which the other measures used). Participants may have thought that the slider being positioned at a zero value to start
indicated that they did not experience feelings of self-blame when, in fact, the slider being positioned at zero was recorded as missing. Future research should consider a different approach or clarify instructions if a slider option is used. Furthermore, the SEQ also asked participants to consider harassment from male perpetrators, making the interaction gendered. It is possible that participants may have experienced sexual harassment from other females. Future research could consider the impact of the gender of the perpetrator of harassment.

Conclusion

Sexual harassment and gender harassment appear to be common in an academic setting. This study provides further support that sexual harassment is associated with negative internalizing outcomes, such as experiences of self-blame, depression, and low self-esteem. The results indicated that there are potential advantages and disadvantages to possessing an incremental shyness mindset that need to be considered before developing an intervention strategy aimed at decreasing shyness mindset specifically related to sexual harassment.
REFERENCES


Garnefski, N., Kraaij, V., & Spinhoven, Ph. (2002). Manual for the use of the cognitive emotion regulation questionnaire. DATEC.


Kagan, J. (2010). *The temperamental thread: How genes, culture, time, and luck make us who we are*. The Dana Foundation.


APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRES
Read each sentence below and then circle the one number that shows how much you agree with it. There are no right or wrong answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Agree</th>
<th>Mostly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. You have a certain amount of shyness, and you really can’t do much to change it.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Your shyness is something about you that you can’t change very much.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. You can learn new things, but you can’t really change your basic shyness.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. You will always be as shy as you are right now.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. No matter what you do, you can’t change how shy you are.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Gender Experiences Questionnaire (GEQ)

**Instructions:** Has anyone associated with your SCHOOL (e.g., teachers, students, staff from university or high school) done any of the following behaviors?

1. Made sexist remarks about people of your gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Referred to people of your gender in insulting or offensive terms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Made sexist remarks or jokes about women in your presence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. Made sexist jokes in your presence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Said crude or gross sexual things in front of others or to you alone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. E-mailed, texted, or instant messaged offensive sexual jokes to you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Made unwanted attempts to draw you into discussion of sexual matters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Told you stories of their sexual exploits when you did not want to hear them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>many times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. Displayed or distributed dirty pictures or stories (e.g., nude pictures).

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

10. Talked to you as if you were a small child instead of speaking to you like an adult.

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

11. Treated you as if you were stupid or incompetent.

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

12. Publicly addressed you as if you were a child (e.g., dear, kid, etc.).

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

13. Suggested women are better suited for raising children than being in the workplace.

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

14. Suggested women belong at home, not in the workplace.

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

15. Said employees who are mothers are less productive than other employees.

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

16. Said employees who are mothers are less dependable than other employees.

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times

17. Referred to the workplace as a “man’s space” (e.g., women do not belong here).

1  never  2  3  4  5  many times
18. Made you feel like you were less of a woman because you had traditionally masculine interests.

| never | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 many times |

19. Criticized you for not behaving “like a woman should.”

| never | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 many times |

20. Treated you negatively because you were not “feminine enough.”

| never | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 many times |
Sexual Experiences Questionnaire

Instructions: Please circle the response which most closely describes your experiences at university. The scale is as follows:
Never = 1  Once or Twice = 2  Sometimes = 3  Often = 4  Most of the time = 5

During the past 12 months at school (e.g., this university, prior university, or high school), have you ever been in a situation where any of your male instructors, supervisors, or peers...

1. …habitually told suggestive stories or offensive jokes? 1 2 3 4 5
2. …made unwanted attempts to draw you into discussion of personal or sexual matters? 1 2 3 4 5
3. …made crude and offensive sexual remarks, either publicly or privately? 1 2 3 4 5
4. …treated you “differently” because you are a woman (e.g., ignored you)? 1 2 3 4 5
5. …given you unwanted sexual attention? 1 2 3 4 5
6. …displayed, used, or distributed sexist or suggestive materials? 1 2 3 4 5
7. …frequently made sexist remarks? (e.g., suggesting women are too emotional) 1 2 3 4 5
8. …attempted to establish a romantic sexual relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage him? 1 2 3 4 5
9. …“put you down” or was condescending to you because of your sex? 1 2 3 4 5
10. …continued to ask you for dates, drinks, dinner, etc. even though you have said no? 1 2 3 4 5
11. …made you feel subtly threatened with some sort of retaliation for not being sexually cooperative (i.e., the mention of an upcoming exam)? 1 2 3 4 5
12. …made you feel like you were being subtly bribed with some sort of reward or special treatment to engage in sexual behavior? 1 2 3 4 5
13. …touched you (e.g., laid a hand on your bare arm, etc.) in a way that made you feel uncomfortable? 1 2 3 4 5
14. …made unwanted attempts to stoke or fondle you (e.g., stroking your leg)?

15. …made unwanted attempts to have sex with you that resulted in you pleading, crying, or physically struggling?

16. …implied faster promotions or better treatment if you were sexually cooperative?

17. …made it necessary for you to respond positively to sexual or social invitations in order to be well-treated in school or on the job?

18. …made you feel afraid that you would be treated poorly if you did not cooperate sexually?

19. …treated you badly for refusing to have sex?

20. Have you ever been sexually harassed?
Attributions of Blame Questionnaire (Brown & Testa, 2007)

Directions: Select an event that happened to you from the above questionnaire that made you the most upset. Answer the questions below in reference to that event.

When did this event occur?
_ Within the last week
_ Within the last month
_ Within the last six months
_ Within the last year
_ Over a year ago

Victim Blame (Self-Blame) Subscale
1. How responsible do you think you were for what happened?
Not at all responsible…………………………………………………….Very responsible
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
2. To what extent are you to blame for what happened?
Not at all  ……………………………………………………………To a great extent
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
3. How much did your behavior cause what happened?
Not at all  ……………………………………………………………Very much
1  2  3  4  5  6  7

Perpetrator (Other) Blame subscale
1. How responsible do you think that the other person was for what happened?
Not at all responsible…………………………………………………….Very responsible
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
2. To what extent is the other person to blame for what happened?
Not at all  ……………………………………………………………To a great extent
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
3. To what extent do you feel that the other person deserves to be punished for what happened?
Not at all  ……………………………………………………………To a great extent
1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Below is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved during the past week. Please rate how often you have felt this way (during the past week.)

1 = rarely or none of the time (less than 1 day)
2 = some or a little of the time (1-2 days)
3 = occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)
4 = most or all of the time (5-7 days)

During the past week...

______ I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me
______ I did not feel like eating my appetite was poor
______ I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with help from my family or friends
______ I felt that I was just as good as other people
______ I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing
______ I felt depressed
______ I felt that everything I did was an effort
______ I felt hopeful about the future
______ I thought my life had been a failure.
______ I felt fearful
______ My sleep was restless
______ I was happy
______ I talked less than usual
______ I felt lonely
______ People were unfriendly
______ I enjoyed life
______ I had crying spells
______ I felt sad
______ I felt that people disliked me
______ I could not get "going"
SIAS-SF

Instructions: Circle the response that is most true of you.

1. I become tense if I have to talk about myself or my feelings.

   Not at all    Slightly    Moderately    Very Extremely

2. I tense-up if I meet an acquaintance in the street.

   Not at all    Slightly    Moderately    Very Extremely

3. I feel tense if I am alone with just one other person.

   Not at all    Slightly    Moderately    Very Extremely

4. I am nervous mixing with people I don’t know well.

   Not at all    Slightly    Moderately    Very Extremely

5. When mixing in a group I find myself worrying I will be ignored.

   Not at all    Slightly    Moderately    Very Extremely

6. I am tense mixing in a group.

   Not at all    Slightly    Moderately    Very Extremely
**RSEQR**

**Instructions:** Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate phrase.

1. On the whole, I love myself.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

2. At times I think I am not lovable at all.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

3. I feel that I have a number of endearing qualities.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

4. I am able to receive affection as well as most other people.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

5. I feel that I do not have many qualities to care about.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

6. I certainly feel unlovable at times.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

7. I feel that I am a person worth caring about, at least on an equal plane with others.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

8. I wish I could let myself be cared about.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am not very warm.
   - **Strongly Agree**
   - **Agree**
   - **Disagree**
   - **Strongly Disagree**

10. I take a positive attitude toward how much others will like me.
    - **Strongly Agree**
    - **Agree**
    - **Disagree**
    - **Strongly Disagree**
APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE
1. What is today’s date? _______________

2. What is your date of birth? _______________

3. Sex (circle one):
   - Female
   - Male
   - Transgender

4. Education (circle one):
   - 1st Year College Student
   - 2nd Year College Student
   - 3rd Year College Student
   - 4th Year College Student
   - 5th Year or Beyond

5. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino (circle one):
   - No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
   - Yes, Puerto Rican
   - Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
   - Yes, Cuban
   - Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
6. **Race** (circle one or more)

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian Indian
- Japanese
- Native Hawaiian
- Chinese
- Korean
- Guamanian or Chamorro
- Filipino
- Vietnamese
- Other Asian
- Other Pacific Islander
- Some Other Race

7. **Marital Status** (circle one):

- Never Married
- Living w/ Significant Other
- Married
-Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
8. **Annual Family Income** (circle one):

- Less than $45,000
- $45,001 – $50,000
- $50,001 – $55,000
- $55,001 – $60,000
- $60,001 – $65,000
- $65,001 – $70,000
- $70,001 – $75,000
- $75,001 – $80,000
- Over $80,000

9. What is your major? __________________________

10. What is your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Pansexual
- Asexual
- Prefer Not to Answer

11. Approximately how many classes have you attended in the past week? ______

12. Approximately how many classes have you missed in the past week? ______

13. How many of the classes missed in the past week was due to someone making you feel uncomfortable? ______

14. Have you ever missed classes because someone made you uncomfortable? ______