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Personality and the Likelihood to Sexually Harass[1]

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To identify personality traits associated with sexual harassment proclivities, scales that measure the Likelihood to Sexually Harass (LSH) and personality traits were administered to 150 respondents. Peer reports of personality were also obtained from respondents' acquaintances. The Big Five factors and a newly suggested major dimension of personality, named Honesty–Humility, were measured to represent respondents' personalities. Two major findings were obtained. First, as predicted, Honesty–Humility was more strongly associated with sexual harassment proclivities than were any of the Big Five, within both self- and peer reports. Second, among the Big Five, only peer-reported Intellect/Imagination (i.e., Openness to Experience) contributed to the prediction of LSH independently of Honesty–Humility. The importance of using an optimal framework of personality structure was discussed.

KEY WORDS: personality; Big Five; sexual harassment; LSH scale; Honesty–Humility.

It is widely recognized that sexual harassment is one of the most common forms of aggressive behavior at work. Reported sexual harassment incidents have increased in the United States (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], 1999), and sexual harassment remains the primary ground of complaint under the Sex Discrimination Act in Australia. In fact, almost half of the total complaints filed by female employees in Australia between 1999 and 2000 involved an allegation of sexual harassment (Equal Opportunity Commission of Australia, 2000). It is not surprising, therefore, that organizational psychologists have paid consistent attention to various aspects of sexual harassment within the last 20 years.

Past research on sexual harassment has demonstrated that the experience of sexual harassment has significant effects on employee health and well-being as well as on organizational variables such as job satisfaction and organizational/work withdrawal (Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley, 1997; Pryor, 1995). In addition, there have been some improvements in understanding what causes sexual harassment at work. For example, some group-level variables such as organizational climate for sexual harassment, job gender context (i.e., gendered nature of a job; Fitzgerald et al., 1997), and local social norms about sexual harassment (Pryor, LaVite, & Stoller, 1993) have often been hypothesized, and found, to be associated with the prevalence of sexual harassment incidents.

Although the past 20 years of research on sexual harassment have greatly improved our understanding of the consequences of sexual harassment victimization, and of the contextual variables that increase sexual harassment, relatively little has been learned as to individual characteristics of sexual harassment perpetrators other than some demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, and education (Terpstra & Cook, 1985). This probably reflects the difficulty of obtaining participant samples that consist of actual sexual harassment offenders. In this study, we attempted to fill this apparent gap by examining personality characteristics that are associated with

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men's sexual harassment proclivities, as measured by the Likelihood to Sexually Harass (LSH) scale developed by Pryor (1987). Instead of examining actual offenders, we measured nonoffenders' proclivity toward sexual harassment and correlated that propensity with the major personality traits. In this way, we could avoid the difficulties of obtaining a sexual harassment perpetrator sample and yet still identify potentially relevant personality characteristics of likely perpetrators.

Validity Evidence for the Likelihood to Sexually Harass (LSH) Scale

The LSH scale contains 10 hypothetical scenarios that depict situations in which the male respondent has power over an attractive female subordinate. Male respondents are asked to rate the probability that they would engage in acts of sexual harassment (e.g., granting the female subordinate's request in exchange for a sexual favor). A similar methodology has previously been used successfully in the study of rape proclivities (Malamuth, 1986).

The psychometric properties of the LSH scale have been widely documented. The internal consistency reliability of the LSH scale typically exceeds .90 for most samples (Pryor, Giedd, & Williams, 1995; Pryor & Meyers, 2000). As for validity evidence, the LSH scale has been found to correlate with other questionnaire measures related to sexual aggression such as Malamuth's Likelihood to Rape Scale (Malamuth, 1986), Burt's Adversarial Sexual Beliefs and Rape Myth Acceptance scales (Burt, 1980; see Pryor, 1987), and Barling et al.'s Sexual Harassment Questionnaire (Barling et al., 1996; see Larrimer-Scherbaum & Popovich, 2001).

The validity evidence for the LSH scale is not limited to its relation to questionnaire measures. The LSH scale has been found to correlate with actual behavioral measures of sexual harassment. Dall'Ara and Maass (1999) found in a laboratory study that higher scorers on the LSH scale were more likely than lower scorers to send pornographic materials to a female confederate when they were given the opportunity. In laboratory studies, Pryor and colleagues (e.g., Pryor, 1987; Pryor et al., 1993) have demonstrated that the LSH scale is related to a man's tendency to take sexual advantage of women, as operationalized by actual sexual behaviors. For example, Pryor et al. (1993) found that high scorers on the LSH scale engaged more often than lower scorers in sexual touching of female confederates when they observed another man who openly harassed the woman.

Furthermore, high LSH men behave differently from low LSH men when interacting with women. It has been found that people are able to distinguish those who are high in LSH scale scores from those who are low simply by viewing sound-stripped video clips in which a man is interviewing female subordinates (Driscoll, Kelly, & Henderson, 1998; Murphy, Driscoll, & Kelly, 1999). In addition, Barak and Kaplan (1996, cited in Pryor & Meyers, 2000) found that self-reported sexual harassment proclivity was, in fact, correlated with actual reports of sexual harassment behaviors.

Finally, the LSH scale appears to differentiate men in terms of their social cognition processes. In Pryor and Stoller's study (Pryor & Stoller, 1994), male participants were presented with pairs of words that are related to sexuality or social dominance, or that are neutral. When they were asked to memorize the pairs of words, high scorers on the LSH scale tended to overestimate the number of pairs between sexuality terms and dominance terms, whereas low scorers did not. Similar findings were reported in a study by Bargh, Raymond, Pryor, and Strack (1995), in which the authors found that high LSH men had an automatic cognitive link between sexuality and power, whereas no such link was apparent for low LSH men. Given the validity evidence of the LSH scale provided above, the identification of personality traits that correlate with the LSH scale score may well be the first step toward understanding the personality characteristics of actual sexual harassment perpetrators.

Personality Dimensions and the LSH

Although the reliability and validity of the LSH scale have been well established, the transparency of its item content is a potential problem for the use of that scale in organizational settings. However, if there are some personality traits that are strongly associated with LSH, then measures of those traits could be used to identify men who are at high risk for committing acts of sexual harassment. Thus, finding the relations between personality and LSH is likely to be of some practical importance. An understanding of personality—LSH relations is also of potential theoretical importance, as these relations may illuminate some of the psychological processes that underlie sexual harassment behavior, and they might even help us to comprehend the function of personality traits themselves.

Thus far, only a few investigations have been conducted regarding the relation between personality dimensions and LSH. There are, however, two recent such investigations, both of which adopted a well-known personality taxonomy, namely the Five-Factor Model or Big Five structure. Larrimer-Scherbaum and Popovich (2001) found that Agreeableness and Openness to Experience, as measured by the NEO-PI-R (Costa & McCrae, 1992), were the two personality traits that most strongly correlated with the LSH measure ($r = -.31$ and $-.21$ respectively). Pryor and Meyers (2000) tried to predict LSH scores using the Big Five, as measured by John, Donahue, and Kentle's Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991). In their study, the Big Five personality traits explained 9.6% of the variance in the LSH; only Conscientiousness contributed significantly (in the negative direction) to the model. Another interesting aspect of this study was the role played by Openness to Experience in moderating the relationship between LSH and Conscientiousness. Pryor and Meyers found that the Conscientiousness—LSH relation was stronger for those men who were low in Openness to Experience. Despite somewhat different results observed in the two studies, what is common are the relatively modest relations between personality traits and LSH.

Given the modest relation between personality traits and LSH reported in the two studies, one might argue that personality may not have strong implications in determining tendencies to commit sexual harassment. We suggest, however, that this argument may be premature, given the somewhat limited ability of the Big Five to tap personality traits that are related to exploitation and deception, and the apparent existence of a sixth factor that does tap those constructs (Ashton, Lee, & Son, 2000). Because our proposal of the existence of the sixth factor is relatively new (Ashton & Lee, 2001, 2002), we provide a brief account of the proposal here.

Honesty–Humility as the Sixth Dimension of Personality

The Big Five personality factors have become widely known as a result of the popularity of the Five-Factor Model of Costa and McCrae (1992). However, the original empirical basis for the Big Five factors was the discovery of five broad factors in lexical studies of personality structure—specifically, in analyses of personality-descriptive adjectives in the English language. Lexical studies of personality structure have the important advantage that the variable sets used in these studies can make some claim to being representative of the universe of observable personality characteristics. This is because personality-descriptive adjectives of a given language have accumulated over many generations as descriptors of all those personality characteristics that are subjectively important.

Early lexical studies of personality structure were largely confined to the English language, and these studies obtained the "Big Five" factor structure with some consistency. Since about 1990, however, lexical studies have also been conducted, using similar procedures for selecting adjectives, in several European and Asian languages. These studies have generally obtained variants of the first four of the Big Five factors—Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Emotional Stability—although usually with important shifts in the content of the factors (Ashton et al., in press). (That is, the obtained factors sometimes represent combinations of the traditional Big Five; for example, blends of Agreeableness with high Emotional Stability and with low Emotional Stability, rather than the usual Agreeableness and Emotional Stability axes.) In addition, the fifth of the Big Five has also emerged frequently, but its content seems to vary considerably; sometimes it represents Intellect, sometimes Imagination, and sometimes Unconventionality.

The most interesting result of these recent studies, however, is that a sixth factor has also repeatedly emerged, in addition to the Big Five. This sixth factor, which has been named Honesty–Humility, is typically defined by adjectives that suggest sincerity and trustworthiness versus deceit, greed, and conceit. Thus far, this sixth factor has been found in a clear majority of languages in which lexical studies of personality structure have been conducted, including French, German, Hungarian, Italian (both Roman and Triestian versions), Korean, and Polish (see Ashton & Lee, 2001, for a review). This six-factor structure found in these languages did not emerge in early English-language investigations, except in studies of internal ratings (i.e., ratings of trait co-occurrence; see Peabody, 1987; Peabody & Goldberg, 1989).

Ashton et al. (2000) suggested that this new dimension of personality (i.e., Honesty–Humility) represents individual differences in a reluctance versus a willingness to exploit others. Consistent with this view, they found that lexical Honesty–Humility was strongly and negatively correlated with questionnaire measures of exploitation-related traits,

such as Primary Psychopathy (Levenson, Kiehl, & Fitzpatrick, 1995), Machiavellianism (Christie & Geis, 1970), and Social Adroitness (Jackson, 1994). In contrast, none of the Big Five factors was substantially correlated with those exploitation-related traits. Given the close link between the Honesty–Humility dimension and (lack of) exploitation, it is reasonable to suggest that it is this newly proposed major dimension that plays a significant role in determining men's sexual harassment proclivities, the core nature of which involves sexual exploitation. Consistent with this, Honesty–Humility has previously been shown to exert a significant effect on some workplace exploitative behaviors. Specifically, Lee, Ashton, and Shin (in press) showed that Honesty–Humility contributed to the prediction of organizational antisocial behaviors, as measured by Bennett and Robinson's scale (Bennett & Robinson, 2000), much more strongly than did any of the Big Five.

In the present study, we reinvestigated the relationship between personality and LSH, using measures of the Big Five factors and also of the Honesty–Humility factor, in order to determine the location of LSH within this six-dimensional personality space. Personality was measured in this study by obtaining *both* self- *and* peer reports from the respondents in order to determine whether the results would generalize across these two sources of personality ratings.

METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Male participants were recruited through on-campus advertisements placed in residential dormitories surrounding the University of Western Australia and through off-campus advertisements placed in various organizations in the Western Australian community. Participants were asked to bring a male acquaintance whom they had known for at least 5 months. Each man was paid $10 for his participation. Participants completed a self-rating questionnaire that included the personality measures followed by the LSH measure. Participants were also asked to complete a peer report questionnaire that consisted only of the personality measures, in which the participants were asked to respond with reference to the behavior of their acquaintance. The order of responding to the self- and peer report questionnaires was counterbalanced. After they completed the questionnaires all participants were debriefed regarding the study. In this way, 150 participants were recruited. The mean age was 23.1 years ($SD = 9.0$), and a majority of the participants was recruited from universities (74%). Participants were mainly of European descent.

Measures

Likelihood to Sexually Harass (LSH) Scale (Pryor, 1987)

The LSH scale is a self-report scale specifically designed to measure men's proclivities to behave in a sexually exploitative way toward women. It consists of 10 hypothetical scenarios in which the participant himself is described as having the power to take sexual advantage of subordinate women without any threat of negative consequences. On a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all likely*, 5 = *very likely*), the participant is asked to rate the likelihood that he would ask the woman for sexual favors.

IPIP Big Five Scales

Scales from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP; Goldberg, 1999) were used to measure the Big Five personality traits. We used the shorter, 50-item Big Five measure, which contains 10 items per scale. Goldberg (1999) reported convergent validity correlations, which ranged from .57 to .76 (.65–.84 after correcting for attenuation due to scale unreliability), between the adjective Big Five marker variables and these IPIP scales.

The HEXACO-PI Honesty–Humility Scale

As our measure of Honesty–Humility, we used an 18-item scale from the HEXACO Personality Inventory (HEXACO-PI; Lee & Ashton, 2002) that is designed to assess a variety of interrelated traits that have defined the Honesty–Humility factor in lexical studies of personality structure. For example, some HEXACO-PI Honesty–Humility items assess frankness and genuineness in interpersonal relations (e.g., the reverse-keyed item "I don't see anything wrong with using flattery to get ahead in life"). Other items assess a moral aversion toward cheating, stealing, or taking advantage of others, regardless of potential

gain or likelihood of detection (e.g., "I would never accept a bribe, even if it were very large"). Still other items assess a tendency to be unpretentious and unassuming, as opposed to a tendency to desire and feel entitled to status, wealth, and "VIP" treatment (e.g., "I wouldn't really want to belong to an exclusive private club").

Impression Management Scale

We also administered Paulhus's Impression Management scale (Paulhus, 1991), in order to investigate the possibility that any correlations between personality and LSH could be due to variation in respondents' tendencies to present a favorable impression, or "fake good." Because the participants in this study responded under anonymous conditions, we expected that this source of variance would not be important and that scores on the personality scales—and even the Impression Management scale itself—would chiefly represent real trait variance. In order to test the possibility that self-report scores on the Impression Management scale could represent real trait variance in our sample, we also obtained peer reports on that scale. (Note that a score on peer reported Impression Management represents the extent to which the respondent believes that the target individual performs the socially desirable behaviors described in the items. This peer report score does *not* represent the extent to which the respondent believes that the target individual tends to "manage impressions.") A sample item in the original, self-report Impression Management scale is "I never take things that don't belong to me"; the corresponding item for our peer report version of Paulhus's scale is "He never takes things that don't belong to him."

Items from all personality scales—IPIP Big Five, HEXACO-PI Honesty–Humility, and Impression Management—were interspersed throughout the single personality questionnaire booklet. Instructions for these scales were modified appropriately for the peer report version of the questionnaire. For all of the personality scale items, we used a 5-point response scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *agree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Scores on the IPIP Big Five and HEXACO-PI Honesty–Humility scale were scored simply by finding the mean responses across all items, after the recoding of negatively keyed items. For the Impression Management items, a point was assigned only for *agree* and *strongly agree* responses in order to be consistent with Paulhus's scoring method (Paulhus, 1991); in any case, other scoring methods, such as counting only the *strongly agree* option, yielded results very similar to those described below. We totalled scores across these 20 items to produce the Impression Management scale score.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics, internal-consistency reliabilities, and correlations among the LSH scale and the self- and peer report personality scales are presented in Table I. With regard to the descriptive statistics, scores on the LSH scale were quite low ($M = 1.85$ on a 5-point scale); 55 of the 150 respondents had scores of 1.00, and the remaining respondents were distributed in a roughly rectangular fashion throughout the 1.10–5.00 range. All of the substantive personality scales had similar mean scores (ranging from 3.16 to 3.63), all of which were not far above the theoretical midpoint (i.e., 3.00 on a 1–5-point scale). The fact that the personality scales had similar distributions is important because it ensures that differences in their correlations with the LSH scale cannot be due to the common influence of response styles such as infrequency. The mean scores on the Impression Management scale (reported in Table I in terms of scale totals rather than item means) were generally rather low, which suggests that participants were generally responding frankly. This interpretation is supported by the fact that the mean score was actually slightly higher in peer reports ($M = 6.44$) than in self-reports ($M = 5.74$).

Internal-Consistency Reliabilities

As shown in Table I, the internal-consistency reliability of the LSH scale in this sample was .94. This very high value is similar to those reported previously (see Pryor et al., 1995 for a review). For the substantive personality scales, internal-consistency reliabilities were all reasonably high, within both self- and peer report versions. These values are also similar to those reported previously (e.g., Goldberg, 1999; Lee & Ashton, 2002). Reliabilities for the Impression Management scale are also close to reported values (Paulhus, 1991).

Table I. Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Intercorrelations of LSH and Self- and Peer Reported Personality Trait Scales

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
1. LSH	1.85	.99	.94															
2. Age	23.1	9.0	−.23															
Self-reports of personality																		
3. Extraversion	3.21	.73	.07	−.14	.86													
4. Agreeableness	3.63	.49	−.23	−.03	.37	.70												
5. Conscientiousness	3.16	.55	−.16	.14	−.02	.17	.69											
6. Emotional Stability	3.20	.67	−.16	−.10	.21	.10	.17	.81										
7. Intellect/Imagination	3.53	.56	−.09	−.25	.37	.32	.21	.07	.75									
8. Honesty–Humility	3.26	.59	−.50	.15	−.23	.16	.18	.25	−.08	.82								
9. Impression Management	5.74	3.31	−.21	.24	−.09	.09	.31	.21	.02	.50	.68							
Peer reports of personality																		
10. Extraversion	3.28	.74	−.04	−.07	.48	.16	−.10	−.04	.21	−.19	−.22	.86						
11. Agreeableness	3.56	.63	−.29	.07	.13	.28	.19	.02	.02	.21	.08	.25	.81					
12. Conscientiousness	3.22	.58	−.17	.03	.03	.06	.43	.17	.09	.12	.20	.11	.36	.73				
13. Emotional Stability	3.35	.67	−.05	−.11	.11	.11	.01	.27	−.09	.00	−.03	.26	.14	.16	.82			
14. Intellect/Imagination	3.39	.56	−.28	−.02	.00	.07	.06	.00	.30	.18	−.04	.31	.37	.22	.00	.74		
15. Honesty–Humility	3.19	.55	−.32	.08	−.13	.09	.23	.10	−.04	.43	.28	−.15	.41	.22	.27	.17	.79	
16. Impression Management	6.44	3.86	−.18	.18	.00	.09	.19	.11	−.10	.23	.45	−.09	.22	.25	.23	.02	.42	.76

Note. $N = 150$. If $|r| > .21$, $p < .01$. Values in the diagonal are reliabilities. LSH = Likelihood to Sexually Harass. Mean and standard deviation for Impression Management are based on scale totals, not item means.

Correlations Among the Big Five and Honesty–Humility Personality Scales

Several of the correlations among the personality scales are noteworthy. First, the self/peer convergent validities of the Big Five and Honesty–Humility scales were all significantly positive (ranging from .28 for Emotional Stability to .47 for Extraversion), thus providing additional evidence for the validity of the personality scales used in the present study. Second, the correlations between the sixth personality factor (i.e., Honesty–Humility) and the Big Five were quite modest in size. Within self-ratings, several of the correlations among the Big Five scales were higher than were any of the correlations between Honesty–Humility and the Big Five.

Correlations Between LSH and Personality

Before we discuss the correlations between LSH and personality variables, it is interesting to note that age was modestly, but significantly, negatively correlated with LSH. This result is consistent with Baker, Terpstra, and Cutler's observation (Baker, Terpstra, & Cutler, 1990) that some behaviors that are perceived as sexual harassment by employees (i.e., older individuals) are often seen as acceptable behaviors by students (i.e., younger individuals).

As seen in Table I, several personality variables showed significant correlations with LSH. In self-report data, LSH correlated strongly with Honesty–Humility, $r = -.50$, $p < .001$, moderately with Agreeableness, $r = -.23$, $p < .01$, and marginally with both Conscientiousness, $r = -.16$, $p < .06$, and Emotional Stability, $r = -.16$, $p < .06$. In peer report data, significant correlations were observed for Honesty–Humility, $r = -.32$, $p < .001$, Agreeableness, $r = -.29$, $p < .001$, Intellect/Imagination, $r = -.28$, $p < .001$, and (marginally) Conscientiousness, $r = -.17$, $p < .05$. Thus, within both self- and peer reports, the highest correlation with LSH was obtained by Honesty–Humility, followed by Agreeableness.

Impression Management, LSH, and Personality

The correlations between Impression Management and LSH were .21 ($p < .05$) in self-ratings and .18 ($p < .05$) in peer ratings. These correlations are weaker than those with several of the substantive personality scales, particularly Honesty–Humility, and are not strong enough to account for the personality—LSH relations. For example, the partial correlation between (self-reported) Honesty–Humility and LSH, with Impression Management removed, was −.47 ($p < .001$). Thus, the correlations between self-reported personality and LSH are chiefly attributable to personality trait variance and not to response style variance. This result converges with the finding, above, that *peer* reported personality also correlated with LSH.

Table II. Results of Multiple Regression Analyses Using Likelihood to Sexually Harass as the Dependent Variable

	Self-reports (β)	Peer reports (β)
Extraversion	0.05	0.01
Agreeableness	−0.13	−0.12
Conscientiousness	−0.02	−0.04
Emotional Stability	−0.03	0.03
Intellect/Imagination	−0.10	−0.19**
Honesty–Humility	−0.47**	−0.23**
R	.535**	.407**

*$p < .05$. **$p < .01$.

It is interesting that self- and peer reported Impression Management correlated positively in this sample, $r = .45$, $p < .001$. This suggests that participants' self-reports, under these anonymous conditions, were not strongly influenced by a tendency to "fake good"; instead, self-report Impression Management scores in this sample apparently represent actual trait variance in personality dimensions such as Honesty–Humility and Conscientiousness. This is consistent with previous suggestions that Impression Management scores, under conditions of anonymous responding, reflect actual personality variation rather than deliberate faking (Meston, Heiman, Trapnell, & Paulhus, 1998; Paulhus, 1991).

Multiple Regression Analyses

The results of multiple regression analyses, using all six personality variables as predictors of LSH, are shown in Table II. Among the self-report versions of the personality scales, only Honesty–Humility was a significant predictor of LSH, $\beta = -.468$, $p < .001$; the contribution of Agreeableness was not significant, $\beta = -.134$, $p = .10$. Among the peer report versions of the same scales, both Honesty–Humility, $\beta = -.232$, $p < .02$, and Intellect/Imagination, $\beta = -.186$, $p < .05$, were significant predictors of LSH. Overall, the self-report and peer report personality scales produced multiple correlations of .53 and .41, respectively, with LSH.[6]

[6]Without including Honesty–Humility as a major dimension of personality, one might have considerably underestimated the role that personality plays in influencing sexual harassment proclivities. Note that the R^2 obtained from the equation involving self-ratings of the Big Five was only .12, which is very close to those obtained in the two previous studies that used self-reports of personality: .14 (Larrimer-Scherbaum & Popovich, 2001) and .10 (Pryor & Meyers, 2000). When peer ratings of the Big Five traits were used, R^2 was .13 in this study.

Thus, to summarize these regression results, Honesty–Humility contributed independently to the prediction of LSH in both self- and peer reports, and Intellect/Imagination added to the prediction of LSH within peer reports. In contrast, Agreeableness did not contribute uniquely to the prediction of LSH either in self- or peer reports, despite the significant zero-order correlations between Agreeableness and LSH; apparently, the correlation between Agreeableness and LSH is accounted for to some extent by the modest relations of both of those variables with the remaining personality scales.

Comparison of Low-, Medium-, and High-LSH Groups

One concern that might be raised about the results reported thus far is that the clearly nonnormal distribution of LSH scores violates the assumptions that underlie correlational and regression analyses. We therefore performed another series of analyses based on a simple division of participants into low-, medium-, and high-LSH categories. We designated as low-LSH men all those who gave a "1" response (i.e., not at all likely to make an offer in exchange for sexual favors) to all 10 LSH items. We designated as high-LSH men all those whose mean response across all 10 LSH items was at or above 3.0 (i.e., the scale midpoint). All other men were classified within the medium-LSH group. According to this classification, 55 men were low-LSH, 70 were medium-LSH, and 25 were high-LSH.

As shown in Table III, the results based on ANOVA and on group mean differences for the three LSH groups were largely consistent with those based on the correlational data of Table I. In self-report data, the low- and high-LSH participants differed by nearly 1.5 standard deviation units on Honesty–Humility; the second largest difference, for Agreeableness, did not quite reach 0.5 standard deviation units. In peer report data, Honesty–Humility again showed the largest effect, with more than a 1.0 standard deviation unit difference between the low- and high-LSH participants, who also differed by about three-quarters of a standard deviation unit on Agreeableness and Intellect/Imagination. Thus, these results confirm the correlational data reported above, despite the nonnormal distribution of LSH scores.

Table III. Mean Scores on Personality Scales of Low-, Medium-, and High-LSH Participants

	LSH category				
	Low	Medium	High	$F_{(2,149)}$	$d_{\text{hi}-\text{lo}}$
Self-reports					
Extraversion	3.09	3.27	3.32	1.33	0.33
Agreeableness	3.73	3.61	3.45	3.11	−0.47
Conscientiousness	3.30	3.05	3.14	3.44	−0.30
Emotional Stability	3.36	3.08	3.14	2.78	−0.32
Intellect/Imagination	3.54	3.56	3.45	0.34	−0.16
Honesty–Humility	3.70	3.08	2.83	37.10**	−1.47
Peer reports					
Extraversion	3.18	3.39	3.17	1.52	−0.01
Agreeableness	3.75	3.51	3.25	6.22*	−0.80
Conscientiousness	3.38	3.12	3.13	3.44	−0.43
Emotional Stability	3.33	3.39	3.29	0.23	−0.07
Intellect/Imagination	3.56	3.33	3.20	4.48#	−0.64
Honesty–Humility	3.42	3.13	2.85	11.30**	−1.03

Note. $N_{\text{low}} = 55$, $N_{\text{medium}} = 70$, $N_{\text{high}} = 25$. d_{hi-lo} is calculated as the difference between the means of the high and low groups, divided by the standard deviation of the total sample. LSH = Likelihood to Sexually Harass. See text for description of classification. #$p < .02$. *$p < .01$. **$p < .001$.

DISCUSSION

Honesty–Humility and LSH

The most important result of the present study is the finding of a strong negative relation between LSH and Honesty–Humility. This finding illustrates the practical and theoretical importance of including Honesty–Humility, along with the Big Five, among the major dimensions of personality. In both self- and peer report data, Honesty–Humility was not only significantly correlated with LSH, but it was also the *strongest* correlate of LSH, surpassing all of the Big Five dimensions. In terms of Honesty–Humility scale scores, the low- and high-LSH participants differed by about 1.5 standard deviations in self-report data, and by about 1.0 standard deviations in peer report data.

In addition to the obvious practical importance of Honesty–Humility, in terms of predicting LSH, there is also some theoretical benefit to including Honesty–Humility among the major dimensions of personality. We have argued elsewhere that low Honesty–Humility represents a tendency to take advantage of others, a view that is consistent with the substantial negative correlations of Honesty–Humility with machiavellianism and primary psychopathy. Given the inherently exploitative nature of sexual harassment, the negative correlation between LSH and Honesty is easily understood. In contrast, the other Big Five factors do not so clearly suggest individual differences in exploitation of others, and their conceptual (as well as empirical) overlap with LSH is correspondingly less extensive. If we include Honesty–Humility among the major dimensions of personality, our understanding of the location of LSH within the personality space becomes much clearer.

Intellect/Imagination (or Openness to Experience) and LSH

Another interesting result of this study was the significant contribution of peer reported Intellect/Imagination to the prediction of LSH. This finding is consistent with the finding by Larrimer-Scherbaum and Popovich (2001) of a significant negative relationship between LSH and the NEO-PI-R version of Intellect/Imagination (i.e., Openness to Experience). Thus, an interesting question arises: which aspect of the Intellect/Imagination factor is responsible for this negative relation with LSH? One possibility is that this relation is a reflection of authoritarianism, given that authoritarian men may tend to have illegitimate feelings of power and dominance over women, and hence a higher tendency to sexually harass. Pryor (1987) indeed found that the LSH scale correlated positively with Authoritarianism as measured by Forced Choice F scale (Berkowitz & Wolkon, 1964). Authoritarianism measures have also been found to correlate negatively with Intellect/Imagination or Openness to Experience. For example, Heaven and Bucci (2001) found that IPIP Openness to Experience correlated −.40 with Right-Wing Authoritarianism. Taken together, these results suggest that authoritarianism may at least partially mediate the relationship between Intellect/Imagination (or Openness to Experience) and LSH that has been found in the present research and in the studies of Larrimer-Scherbaum and Popovich (2001).

On a final note, it is interesting to note that Pryor and Meyers (2000) found a moderating effect of Openness to Experience in the relationship between LSH and Conscientiousness. That is, they found that those men who were low in Conscientiousness (the only significant Big Five predictor of LSH in their study) were more willing to engage in this type of behavior, but this was the case *only* for men who were also low in Openness to Experience. When we conducted moderated multiple regression analyses, no such interaction effect was observed in our data. Nevertheless, whether Openness to Experience plays a

role as a main effect variable or as a moderating variable is a question to be clarified in future research. In any case, future researchers should pay more attention to the role of Openness to Experience in predicting LSH.

Self- and Peer Reports

Although we obtained both self- and peer reports on the personality traits, the LSH measure was administered only in a self-report version. It is true that self-reports of such undesirable behavior may be vulnerable to faking and that more efforts should be given to obtain peers' observation-based measures of sexual harassment. This does not mean, however, that self-report measurement of LSH is invalid. The validity evidence of self-reports on the LSH measure has been widely documented, as was reviewed in the Introduction. In this study, too, the self-report measure of LSH was meaningfully related to *peer reported* personality traits, and this finding provides further evidence of the validity of LSH. Taken together, these facts suggest that research based on the self-report measure of LSH should be considered to be useful, although it is preferable that self-reports be complemented by other objective measures of sexual harassment.

Some comment should be made regarding differences between the self- and peer report personality scales in the sizes of their correlations with LSH. Specifically, self-report Honesty–Humility was correlated *more* strongly with LSH than was peer report Honesty–Humility, whereas self-report Agreeableness and Intellect/Imagination were correlated *less* strongly with LSH than were peer report Agreeableness and Intellect/Imagination. We believe that the most likely explanation for this difference is the greater differentiation among socially desirable traits in self-reports. Some evidence of this may be found by comparing the correlations among the six personality scales under self-report and peer report conditions. The mean correlation among the self-report scales was only .10, which suggests that these scales assessed six truly independent constructs. However, the mean correlation among the peer report scales was considerably higher, .30, which suggests that within peer reports, each scale tended to incorporate some variance from other traits in addition to variance from its own intended trait. This conflation of independent traits under peer report conditions presumably tended to weaken slightly the correlation between LSH and Honesty–Humility but also to strengthen slightly the correlation between LSH and the Agreeableness and Intellect scales. Alternatively, the greater validity of peer reports over self-reports for Agreeableness and Intellect/Imagination may be simply a chance occurrence that would be unlikely to be replicated in future studies. An interesting question for future research will be to determine which source of personality trait information—self-reports or peer reports—is best able to predict sexual harassment behaviors that are observed directly.

Implications

Some personality traits were found to be quite strongly correlated with LSH scores in this study. In particular, the inclusion of Honesty–Humility as a sixth major dimension of personality was responsible for a much stronger link between LSH and personality traits than has been found previously. The Honesty–Humility factor dramatically increased our ability to identify men with high risk for sexual harassment. This finding may be of some practical value, as it suggests a less transparent method of identifying men who are at risk for committing acts of sexual harassment.

Personality measures might be used to make some administrative decisions to manage workplace sexual harassment effectively. We believe, however, that merely screening out job applicants with a sexual harassment-prone personality might not be a prudent practice, given the empirical findings that organizational factors play a profound role in the origins of workplace sexual harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1997; Pryor et al., 1993; Timmerman & Bajema, 2000). Furthermore, the relationship between personality traits and actual sexual harassment should be established empirically under nonanonymous and job applicant contexts before we actually start using personality traits in selection contexts.

Nevertheless, the personality profiles with high risk of sexual harassment can potentially help organizations in making certain decisions. For example, when it is suspected that there are some work units with risky organizational characteristics for sexual harassment (e.g., poor sexual harassment climate, male-dominated work context) or when there are some work units with a previous history of sexual harassment incidents, the employer may want to avoid assigning to those units any workers whose personality profiles suggest a higher-than-average risk for engaging in sexual harassment. Consistent with this suggestion, Pryor and his colleagues have repeatedly shown that actual sexual harassment is most likely to occur when individual differences in sexual

harassment proclivities and risky situational factors are present in combination (see Pryor & Meyers, 2000).

The effectiveness of sexual harassment training may be maximized by correctly identifying men with high proclivities for sexual harassment and then targeting them for intensive training (e.g., Pryor et al., 1993). For example, Perry, Kulik, and Schmidtke (1998) demonstrated that their video-based sexual harassment awareness training had significant positive effects on some outcome variables, such as participants' knowledge and actual behaviors related to sexual harassment. These effects were much greater for those men with high LSH scores than for those with low LSH scores. From this finding, the authors suggested that the same sexual harassment training may not be equally effective or necessary for everyone and that we should consider targeting trainees' proclivities for sexual harassment in order to obtain the best outcomes. This suggestion underlines the importance of correctly identifying men who are more likely to commit sexual harassment. The personality correlates of LSH, as found in this study, might be used as a less transparent means of identifying those men.

Future Research

Finally, we should note that this study was conducted with the express aim of identifying the personality characteristics of potential sexual harassers. Therefore, variables other than personality characteristics were not investigated. It is important to recall, however, that the prevalence of sexual harassment cannot be understood fully without considering the social contexts in which it occurs (Gutek, 1985). In both laboratory (Pryor et al., 1993) and field settings (Fitzgerald et al., 1997), the importance of social influences, such as modelling and organizational climate or norms, have been demonstrated empirically. For example, Pryor et al. (1993) found that high LSH men engaged in sexual physical contacts more often than low LSH men *only when* a harassing role model was introduced. The personality traits found to correlate with LSH in this study should be examined together with such social contextual variables in future research.

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