



# Perspectives

## **Sexual Harassment in Non-profit Organizations: Organizational Dysfunctions or Harasser's Behavior?**

Journal:	<i>Academy of Management Perspectives</i>
Manuscript ID	AMP-2020-0028.R5
Document Type:	Article
Research Methods:	Cross-sectional < Research Design, Multilevel (HLM, WABA, RCM,□) < Estimation Models
Theoretical Perspectives:	Human capital, Leadership theories, Affective events
Disciplinary Domains:	Ethics and codes of conduct < Business, Society and Ethics, Policy and regulation < Business, Society and Ethics, Public sector management < Business, Society and Ethics, Labor relations < Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations, National policy environment < International Management, Organization reputation < Macro-Organization Behavior, Justice/ fairness < Micro-Organizational Behavior

## **Sexual Harassment in Non-profit Organizations: Organizational Dysfunctions or Harasser's Behavior?**

Imanol Nuñez and Andrea Ollo-López

### **Abstract**

In 2018, the media spotlight fell on several high-profile non-profit organizations (NPOs) in connection with sexual harassment (SH). Since then, a flood of SH cases has severely impacted the image and reputation of the non-profit sector. NPOs have been accused of attempting to cover up SH and, in some cases, of leniency towards the harassers. However, these claims have not been rigorously investigated. In this paper, we study the role and behavior of harassers and argue that they may target organizations operating in the nonprofit sector owing to specific conditions that enable them to avoid detection and punishment. We argue that an environment advantageous to those who perpetrate harassment is created by several exogenous (non-organizational) factors, such as the vulnerability of aid recipients, the lack of legal protection of volunteers, and, in some cases, the cultural tolerance of discrimination against women. From this novel perspective, traditional anti-SH policies that focus on reacting to harassment and supporting the victim are viewed as necessary—but insufficient—approaches to the problem. We therefore propose a series of complementary policies that enable NPOs to adapt their operational environments in order to curb SH.

*Keywords:* sexual harassment, non-profit organizations, organizational dysfunction, harassers' behavior.

## Introduction

News of sexual misconduct among some Oxfam aid workers in Haiti hit the media in early 2018, rapidly escalating from individual cases of alleged misconduct to engulf the entire organization. In February 2018, Oxfam's Deputy Executive Director accepted full responsibility for the handling of the scandal and resigned. However, in the weeks that followed, allegations of a cover-up and new cases of sexual harassment (SH) against staff and volunteers made headlines around the world.

Oxfam suffered immediate and dramatic consequences, losing more than 7,000 donors in just two months, with the UK government demanding it suspend all applications for domestic funding. On February 17, the charity reacted by issuing an apology through the media and announced it would set up an independent commission to investigate the claims. However, when another major charity, Save the Children, revealed it had investigated 53 allegations of SH in 2016, the evidence of a culture of SH in charities and non-profit organizations (NPOs) began to grow. Some claimed this was a major, structural problem that could jeopardize the future of the nonprofit sector (Shapiro, 2018).

Unfortunately, the issue returned to prominence in September 2021 when the UN announced the results of its investigation into allegations of sexual abuse in the Democratic Republic of Congo during the Ebola crisis of 2020. The report identified 83 aid workers of the World Health Organization (WHO) who, it was alleged, had systematically abused women and girls from the region. The WHO has declared itself appalled by the report's findings (Farge & Holland, 2021).

The resulting loss of trust and credibility may have substantial implications for NPOs in two distinct but connected policy areas. First, the recent scandals imply the current regulatory and policy framework may fail to protect women from SH—

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3 particularly those already suffering from poverty, discrimination, and exclusion.

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5 The UK's House of Commons International Development Committee, in a recent  
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7 report on its investigation of several cases, concluded that:

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10 the sexual exploitation and abuse of aid recipients by aid providers and  
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12 peacekeepers is by no means a new issue (...) the problem has a documented  
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14 history stretching back nearly 20 years and reaching across many geographical  
15  
16 and organizational boundaries. (2018, p. 8)

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19 Second, damage to the reputation of charities may alter public opinion, in turn  
20  
21 influencing how voters and governments view the third sector. While a loss of trust is  
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23 undoubtedly problematic for NPOs, it may directly impact the lives of aid recipients by  
24  
25 further limiting their access to essential resources. For instance, the Scottish Council for  
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27 Voluntary Organizations (2019) was reported that 34% of third-sector organization  
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29 managers believed the financial situation of their NPO would deteriorate, with 75%  
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31 predicting a financial downturn across the sector as a whole. Worryingly, 81% of  
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33 respondents also anticipated an increased demand for NPO services. In this context, the  
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35 potential loss of public confidence in NPOs represents a significant challenge for  
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37 policymakers, as the sector is crucial to the effective implementation of development and  
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39 social aid policies.

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42 It is, then, surprising that the literature does not directly address the problem of  
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44 harassment in nonprofits, with no rigorous empirical evidence linking SH to NPOs.  
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46 However, the organizational drivers of SH—some of which may be present in NPOs—have  
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48 been investigated (O'Leary-Kelly et al., 2009). For example, Raver and Gelfand (2005)  
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50 observed lower rates of SH in organizations with stricter procedures of supervision and  
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52 control, and Peirce, Smolinski, and Rosen (1998) linked reduced incidences of SH to clear  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 and fair organizational procedures. All these elements belong to advanced human resource  
4 management (HRM) systems, and NPOs do not implement these differently than other  
5 organizations (Ridder, Baluch, & Piening, 2012).  
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10 Furthermore, studies of work-based SH have adopted a micro-level perspective, in  
11 which organizational responses are evaluated in terms of the protection afforded to victims.  
12 Yet this victim-organization orientation largely ignores two elements that are, in our view,  
13 fundamental and interconnected: the behavior of the harasser and the organizational  
14 environment. In this paper, we propose a model that integrates the (non-random) behavior  
15 of the harasser with the factors that explain the high prevalence of SH in NPOs. We argue  
16 that among the causes of increased SH in NPOs, the most fundamental are related not to  
17 practices that can be modified endogenously (the traditional approach) but to exogenous  
18 environmental factors that enable the harasser's behavior.  
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31 Three environmental factors may raise SH rates in NPOs. First among these is the  
32 increased vulnerability of aid recipients due to their economic dependency on NPOs. The  
33 second element is the inadequate legal protection of NPO volunteers in comparison to  
34 other employees in cases of harassment. The third factor is the cultural tolerance of  
35 discrimination against women in some countries where NPOs traditionally operate. When  
36 combined, these three factors create an environment favorable to the perpetrators of SH.  
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45 The contribution of this paper is threefold. First, we review the literature to pinpoint  
46 how organizational dysfunction contributes to the unsuccessful efforts of NPOs to prevent  
47 SH. Secondly, we incorporate the harasser into the analysis by describing three types of  
48 offender and what attracts them to NPOs, showing how environmental factors specific to  
49 NPOs may favor their actions. Finally, we discuss the ineffectiveness of classical anti-SH  
50 policies that focus on reacting to harassment and subsequently assisting victims. Our  
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3 assertion that the current policy framework is ineffective is supported, among others, by the  
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5 findings of Mazurana (2018) concerning Oxfam's failure to address SH, and Elliott and  
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7 Tobin's (2018) claim that repeat offenders may target NPOs. On this basis, we propose  
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9 measures aimed at identifying and neutralizing the action of harassers in high-prevalence  
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11 NPO environments.  
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### 14 **Protecting victims of SH: the Human Resources Management (HRM) perspective**

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16 As Wright and Boswell (2002) explain, the micro perspective of HRM research (the  
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18 macro perspective considers HR strategy) has examined the impact of functional practices  
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20 such as training or compensation systems on performance indicators including worker  
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22 productivity or product quality. Most previous research on workplace SH from the micro  
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24 perspective examines the responses of individual organizations (O'Leary-Kelly et al.,  
25  
26 2009). These studies look to identify and evaluate the practices that most effectively protect  
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28 the victims of SH (Bowes-Sperry & O'Leary-Kelly, 2005). The SH management literature  
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30 can thus be considered as a sub-discipline relevant to the micro dimension of HRM  
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32 research.  
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38 SH literature oriented towards the victim/organization has identified a plethora of  
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40 organizational mechanisms and responses that reduce the risk of harassment. Several  
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42 widely-known HR practices, such as raising awareness through training (Zugelder,  
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44 Champagne, & Maurer, 2006) or improving the monitoring and whistleblowing processes  
45  
46 (Knapp et al., 1997), have been shown to reduce workplace SH. Bergman et al. (2002) also  
47  
48 investigated organizational responses to SH complaints and identified a great diversity of  
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50 responses that ranged from disciplining the harasser to encouraging the victim to withdraw  
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52 the complaint. Other studies have attempted to identify the organizational characteristics  
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54 that facilitate a harasser's actions (Hulin, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1996). The seriousness of  
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3 responses to complaints, the risk of reporting SH, and the consequences for the harasser are  
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5 elements of the well-established construct of Organizational Tolerance of Sexual  
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7 Harassment (OTSH).  
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### 10 **Organizational dysfunctions in NPOs: Victim/organization orientation**

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12 Overall, the focus on the victim and the organization's response in the micro-level  
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14 SH literature helps identify dysfunctions that may contribute to cases of harassment in  
15  
16 NPOs. In particular, three main organizational features of NPOs may explain weaknesses in  
17  
18 their protection systems: organizational fragility, high turnover of workers, and an  
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20 underdeveloped HR function.  
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### 23 **Organizational fragility**

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26 Effective organizations have well-established procedures and policies, and their  
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28 hierarchies and control systems are strictly enforced. In these organizations, sexual  
29  
30 harassers are often deterred because the victims of harassment can rely on effective  
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32 reporting mechanisms (Raver & Gelfand, 2005). However, where there is a lack of formal  
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34 procedures and/or organizational units for reporting and responding to SH incidents, the  
35  
36 path for victims is often tortuous and discouraging.  
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40 Limited access to resources among NPOs has led to the late adoption of systematic  
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42 HRM practices (von Eckardstein & Brandl, 2004). Consequently, certain structural  
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44 characteristics, such as informal and temporary networks, more relaxed monitoring  
45  
46 systems, and lack of HRM experience (Burke & Copper, 2012) may hinder anti-harassment  
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48 measures. Moreover, the levels of unionization and the coverage of collective bargaining  
49  
50 agreements are lower in NPOs (McMullen & Schellenberg, 2002), as the organizational  
51  
52 structure tends to be less formal than legally constituted companies with the social  
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54 economy usually based on associations, cooperatives, or trusts (Westlund, 2003). Because  
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3 formal procedures against SH are often required—and even managed—by trade unions,  
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5 (Kremer & Marks, 1992), any lack of unionization may hinder their implementation.  
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**Turnover of workers**

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10 Workforce instability is one of the most distinctive characteristics of NPOs. In  
11 particular, employees in these organizations are often willing to accept lower salaries (if  
12 they receive any salary at all) and to “donate” some of their work in exchange for intrinsic  
13 benefits (McGinnis, 2011). Such arrangements allow NPO workers to develop their careers  
14 elsewhere. They may accept non-profit work temporarily (Tschirhart & Recascino, 2007),  
15 or combine it with paid employment in another place (Booth, Park, & Glomb, 2009). The  
16 relationship between the worker and the NPO may be weaker for these reasons, or because  
17 it is unpaid, voluntary (Hansman, 1980), or inadequately protected under the law  
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19 (McMullen & Schellenberg, 2002).  
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31 High staff turnover can be a factor in the incidence of organizational SH. First, part-  
32 time employees (particularly volunteers) tend to leave organizations after brief or episodic  
33 periods (Hyde et al., 2014), thereby weakening two fundamental elements—seniority and  
34 authority within the organization—that counteract SH. In addition, the social,  
35 psychological, and even economic costs of reporting SH are potentially high. Bowes-Sperry  
36 and O’Leary-Kelly (2005) explain that a victim often prefers to react passively to  
37 harassment in order to maintain his or her reputation within the workgroup. Since the  
38 employee’s bond with an NPO is based on intrinsic motivation rather than contractual ties,  
39 the victim may quit to avoid the various costs of reporting an incident. This contributes to a  
40 climate of impunity that is likely to increase the incidence of SH.  
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### **Underdeveloped HR function**

A major objective of the human resources function is to improve interpersonal relations and avoid conflict in organizations. Several studies link effective HRM with reduced discrimination or harassment. Raver and Gelfand (2005) showed that SH and poor performance were negatively correlated with other HR functional indicators such as conflict, cohesion, or financial performance. Entis (2018) stated that cases of harassment indicate the inadequacy of HR control mechanisms such as formal and informal structures for victim support.

In recent decades, large companies have introduced anti-SH procedures and policies such as awareness campaigns, specialized training, or legal support (Entis, 2018). However, in organizations whose HR functions are less consolidated, such as small companies (Bartram, 2005), creative industry networks (Hennekam & Bennett, 2017), or NPOs, the adoption of anti-harassment measures may be delayed. Ridder et al. (2012) argue that the human resources architecture of non-profits is weakened by their inconsistent adoption of HRM practices. The implication is that specific practices to counter SH may be ineffective because they are not supported by an established HR management system.

### **Are we missing something? A harasser/environment approach**

The literature described above approaches the problem of SH at work from the micro-level and from a victim-oriented perspective to determine the capacity of organizations to protect those who suffer harassment. As we have explained, there are reasons to think that NPOs may be dysfunctional in these areas. However, we contend that the problem of SH cannot be explained solely in terms of the organization's failure to protect the victims of harassment. In fact, the real source of the problem is neither the victim nor the organization, but arises instead from a combination of acts that are planned

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(to varying extents) and perpetrated by an individual (the harasser), who exploits affordances in the organizational environment to attack his/her victims.

From this perspective, our knowledge of harassers is of critical importance.

O'Leary-Kelly et al. (2009) point out that empirical research into the profile and motives of offenders is very limited in general and particularly so in the management literature. The portrayals of harassers provided by other disciplines are somewhat diffuse. Only a few studies in the field of psychology and violence have analyzed their main characteristics, including sociodemographic profile, sexual proclivities, or personality traits (Pina, Gannon, & Saunders, 2009).

Most studies agree that sexual harassers typically hold negative or hostile attitudes towards women, believe in traditional gender roles, have little empathy, and blame the victim (De Judicibus & McCabe, 2001; Pryor & Stoller, 1994). Beyond these features, sexual harassers are distinguished by three sets of characteristics. First, in sociodemographic terms, the SH offender is most likely to be male (European Commission, 1998; Ménard et al., 2003), married, older, at least as well-educated as the victim, and of equal or higher hierarchical status (DeSouza & Fansler, 2003).

Second, harassers are defined by common personality traits, although minimal research has been carried out in this area. Drawing on the Tailored Personality Assessment System (TAPAS) (Greathouse et al., 2015), Matthews (2017) highlights that the perpetrators of sexual assault typically exhibit traits such as narcissism and dominance, impulsivity, delinquency, and aggressiveness, in opposition to consideration, self-control, responsibility, and aggressiveness, respectively.

The third group of characteristics is related to conscience, or the degree to which the sexual harasser is aware of the impact of his or her actions. The harasser's level of planning

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3 is related to the level of conscience he or she displays (Lengnick-Hall, 1995). In the  
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5 following section, the typical strategies and behaviors deployed by offenders are described  
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7 based on the three-way classification presented by Lengnick-Hall (1995).  
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### 10 **The behavior of the harasser: Self-selection into NPOs**

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12 We argue that the behavior of those who perpetrate SH is unlikely to be random:  
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14 harassers will locate organizations that enable their actions and, as we will argue, may self-  
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16 select into NPOs. What do we know, then, about the strategies and behavior sexual  
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18 harassers adopt? Previous findings are based on the Sexual Harassment Likelihood (LSH)  
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20 Scale developed by Pryor (1987), the most frequently used method for measuring men's  
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22 propensity to engage in SH. Men scoring highly on the LSH scale will perpetrate SH under  
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24 any conditions that enable them to use social power for sexual exploitation (Pryor, Giedd,  
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26 & Williams, 1995). The behavioral patterns of harassers will therefore differ and adjust to  
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28 different environments.  
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33 To explain why people with a high proclivity for SH are more likely to join NPOs,  
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35 the behavioral classification of harassers proposed by Lengnick-Hall (1995) is used. First,  
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37 the *insensitive harasser* is unaware or trivializes the impact of his or her actions on others.  
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39 Young and vulnerable women, the typical recipients of aid, may be particularly prone to  
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41 suffer from this form of SH since their vulnerability and social/cultural isolation may lead  
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43 to aggressions against them being trivialized. Low social status increases the likelihood of  
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45 SH, whether the victims are poorly educated women in India (Zietz & Das, 2018) or low-  
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47 income girls in the United States (Popkin, Leventhal, & Weismann, 2010), among many  
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49 others. In sum, a harasser's callous disregard for his or her most vulnerable victims may  
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51 increase rates of SH in NPOs.  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3           Second, the *opportunistic harasser* exploits the possibilities for harassment when  
4 they arise but does not actively seek them out. Lucero, Allen and Middleton (2006)  
5 emphasize that harassers' behavior is strongly conditioned by the forcefulness of the initial  
6 response to their actions. In this respect, the voluntary status of most victims may weaken  
7 their response because quitting an NPO is easier than incurring the high costs of reporting  
8 the harassment. The volunteer is unlikely to have entered a contractual relationship with the  
9 organization and thus stands to lose less than when leaving a private or public company,  
10 where career prospects or salary may be sacrificed. In such silenced environments, the  
11 actions of the opportunistic harasser are facilitated because victims are less likely to report  
12 offences and because former victims may have left the organization.  
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26           Finally, the *hardcore harasser* describes arguably the most dangerous type: the  
27 individual who plans and implements a strategy to enable SH. Here, harassment consists of  
28 goal-directed behavior informed by a high chance of success and a low probability of  
29 punishment (O'Leary-Kelly, Paetzold, & Griffin, 2000). Many NPOs are particularly  
30 conducive to the activities of these "rational" predators. First, as explained above,  
31 formalized selection procedures for voluntary staff are uncommon among NPOs. This  
32 allows volunteers to self-select into NPOs, which are unlikely to require such staff to hold  
33 educational credentials or prior experience. Therefore, sexual harassers may gain access to  
34 NPOs more easily than private or public companies, where controls regarding criminal or  
35 legal background are stricter. In addition, as previously explained, some organizational  
36 features of NPOs impede the effectiveness of anti-harassment measures, so hardcore  
37 harassers may determine that the probability of punishment is low. Moreover, the  
38 sociodemographic characteristics of NPO participants—particularly volunteers and aid  
39 recipients—may attract this type of offender. McGinnis (2011) reveals that young women  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 from developed countries tend to be more interested in volunteering and therefore join  
4 NPOs more frequently. As Willness, Steel and Lee (2007) highlight, hardcore harassers  
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6 tend to target young women, so NPOs are a readier source of potential victims than other  
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8 organizations. It is reasonable to assume that hardcore harassers perceive they have a higher  
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10 probability of success in NPOs and therefore gravitate towards these organizations.  
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14 [Insert Figure 1 about here]  
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17 Figure 1 summarizes the classification and the relationship of each type of harasser  
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19 to NPOs. It can be argued that insensitive and, in particular, opportunistic harassers may  
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21 not self-select into NPOs to carry out these activities. On the contrary, they may join the  
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23 organization because they share its social mission, but organizational dysfunction may  
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25 create an opportunity for harassment. Conversely, hardcore harassers are likely to assess the  
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27 risk and benefits of joining an NPO for the sole purpose of perpetrating harassment.  
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31 **The NPO environment: Exogenous factors that attract harassers**  
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33 Up to this point in the discussion, our approach has not diverged greatly from the  
34  
35 widely-held view that organizational dysfunctions are the primary cause of SH. We have  
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37 introduced the harasser's behavior into the equation, but if the origin of harassment lay  
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39 exclusively in organizational dysfunction, our focus would remain on analyzing and  
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41 addressing such organizational weaknesses.  
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44 However, we argue that NPO activity has particular characteristics beyond the  
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46 control of organizations that affect the behavior of harassers. These environmental features,  
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48 and their interaction with harassers, may reduce the effectiveness of classical organizational  
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50 measures among NPOs. The main environmental and exogenous factors that may lead to  
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52 the self-selection of harassers into NPOs are threefold: socioeconomic (due to the  
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3 vulnerability of aid recipients); legal (due to the lack of protection for volunteers); and  
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5 cultural (due to the tolerance of female discrimination).  
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**Socioeconomic: the vulnerability of aid recipients**

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10 A major exogenous factor in the NPO environment is the socioeconomic status of  
11  
12 aid recipients. NPOs are fundamentally concerned with solving problems of socioeconomic  
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14 vulnerability, which shapes all aspects of their operations. In particular, the personal and  
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16 family living conditions of the the beneficiaries of aid (typically young women with no  
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18 resources) often depend on NPOs and the actions of their staff—including their harassers.  
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20 In this context, Reporting abuse can jeopardize the image and reputation of the NPO and  
21  
22 impact the vital assistance it provides to the victim and the entire community. This vicious  
23  
24 cycle of (dis)incentives may lead vulnerable women to accept and remain silent about  
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26 harassment, thereby facilitating the actions of harassers.  
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31 In fact, there is some evidence that this is the case. A survey conducted by the  
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33 Humanitarian Women's Network (2016) found that 48% of humanitarian workers had  
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35 experienced some form of harassment, with a much higher likelihood of sexual exploitation  
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37 and harassment among female aid recipients (Spencer, 2018). Moreover, as Eikenberry and  
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39 Mirabella (2020) highlight, when SH occurs, women are sometimes advised not to inform  
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41 donors to prevent the loss of funding. There is no better example of this than what  
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43 happened to Oxfam in 2018 when cases of SH and child exploitation in Haiti became  
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45 public, resulting in substantial cuts to its services (Tulay-Solanke, 2018).  
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**Legal: the lack of protection for volunteers**

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51 NPOs typically employ staff voluntarily with the often-altruistic aim of contributing  
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53 to the mission of the organization. When linked to the activity of NPOs, this may alter the  
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55 organizational environment in ways that limit the effectiveness of anti-harassment  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 measures. First, there are reasons to think that current legal and institutional measures may  
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5 be failing to protect volunteers (Langton, 2014). In particular, the system for preventing SH  
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7 in the workplace is rooted in the contractual link between company and employee.  
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9 Therefore, organizational mechanisms and procedures to prevent SH are limited to  
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11 employees who hold contracts (Reese, 2016). Furthermore, the legal system provides for  
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13 victim compensation and penalties or sanctions for the harasser only when harassment  
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15 occurs in the context of employment (Schoenheider, 1986). Volunteers, since their  
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17 relationship with the organization is not governed by a contract, are excluded from the  
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19 institutional umbrella and then, are not legally protected against SH,  
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24         This shortcoming becomes apparent when reviewing the recent evolution of anti-  
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26 harassment legislation. In the US, workplace SH was defined as a form of sexual  
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28 discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This legislation was further  
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30 developed in the 1970s and 1980s and included in the laws of other countries such as the  
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32 UK in 1975 and Australia in 1984. Such laws made it illegal for employers to discriminate  
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34 on the basis of gender in all terms and conditions of the employment relationship. However,  
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36 it was not until the 1980s that the Equal Employment Opportunity Act (EEOA, 1980)  
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38 issued guidelines to courts addressing gender-based discrimination, including the key  
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40 concept of *sex discrimination* (Lareau, 2016). Section 1603 of those guidelines defined  
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42 harassment as:  
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46             (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is made either  
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48 explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2)  
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50 submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for  
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52 employment decision affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose  
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3 or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or  
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5 creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.  
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8 This conceptual approach was proposed by the social activist MacKinnon (1979)  
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10 and represented a crucial step in the protection of women at work. However, the legislation  
11 described above only protects against harassment within a relationship of employment.  
12  
13 Because, for voluntary uncontracted workers, there are no adverse consequences of SH for  
14 their terms and conditions of employment, applying the law to protect potential victims is  
15 more complex. Easteal and Saunders (2019) note that the courts now apply vicarious  
16 liability (the liability of companies for the acts of their employees) with an increasingly  
17 narrow brush, particularly because of the diffuse connection of SH cases with the  
18 employment relationship. This legislative complexity specifically affects NPOs (as  
19 opposed to organizations in which employment relationships are established) and must be  
20 considered when designing anti-harassment policy in the sector.  
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**Cultural: Tolerance of female discrimination**

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35 Although most NPOs are based in developed countries, their activities are centered  
36 elsewhere in the world. While SH is a universal problem that affects all countries equally, it  
37 is also a fact that sensitivity towards, and tolerance of, discrimination against women is  
38 dependent on elements linked to the culture of each country. Indeed, in many developing  
39 countries, culture and tradition obstruct women's economic development (Morrison &  
40 Jütting, 2005; OECD, 2019), although legal factors and educational or employment norms  
41 also have a strong influence (Morrison & Jütting, 2005). Thus, gender disparities tend to be  
42 greater in developing countries (Jayachandran, 2015) and impact all aspects of women's  
43 experience, including their control over their own lives, and those of their families and  
44 communities.  
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3 According to Morrison and Jütting (2005), the highest rates of discrimination  
4 against women are found in South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and North  
5 Africa—precisely the places where NPOs regularly operate. In some of these countries,  
6 practices such as female genital mutilation, child marriage, or the limitation of fundamental  
7 rights are still permitted (OECD, 2019). The OECD report highlights that, despite great  
8 progress towards gender equality, discrimination against women remains a reality of life in  
9 many countries. This is undoubtedly a feature of the NPO environment that enables  
10 harassment to continue. In a climate of discrimination and abuse, many women endure  
11 harassment from a position of social and legal helplessness. Their position contrasts with  
12 that of their harassers, who exploit an environment of impunity that stymies the  
13 effectiveness of organizational mechanisms to counteract the threat.  
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### 28 **Policy implications**

#### 29 **From the victim/organization orientation to the harasser/environment approach**

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31 The following figures summarize the key characteristics of the two approaches to  
32 harassment contrasted here. Figure 2 represents the more traditional victim/organization  
33 orientation that regards organizational dysfunctions as enabling the harasser's behavior.  
34 From this viewpoint, organizations address their dysfunctions to resolve the issue of SH.  
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42 [Insert Figure 2 about here]

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44 Figure 3 represents our proposed harasser/environment approach, which  
45 complements rather than contradicts the previous one. In Figure 3, the solid lines represent  
46 the relationships incorporated from the victim/organization orientation and the dashed lines  
47 represent the new interactions proposed in this paper. From the harasser/environment  
48 approach, the wider environment (and particularly the NPO element) determines the  
49 harasser's behavior (self-selection) and, to a large extent, the organizational dysfunctions  
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3 themselves. Thus, the probability of SH increases markedly for two reasons: the  
4  
5 opportunistic behavior of the harasser in exploiting organizational dysfunctions and the  
6  
7 high density of harassers who choose to join NPOs. Consequently, we stress that acting  
8  
9 exclusively on dysfunctions will have a limited impact on those organizations such as  
10  
11 NPOs that operate in discriminatory environments.  
12  
13

14 [Insert Figure 3 about here]  
15  
16

17 There follows a series of policy recommendations that can be applied to NPOs in  
18  
19 different areas. In each section, we will contrast the measures that are usually implemented  
20  
21 from the victim/organization orientation with those proposed in a harasser/environment  
22  
23 approach. All these recommendations are summarized in Table 1 alongside the activities  
24  
25 proposed to support them.  
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### 28 **HRM policies: from signaling to screening** 29

30 One of the fundamental objectives of traditional SH prevention systems is to signal  
31  
32 potential risks by identifying and flagging them up to potential victims. These risks  
33  
34 traditionally include organizational factors (as explained above) and paradoxically,  
35  
36 characteristics of the victim (rather than the harasser) such as physical attractiveness or sex  
37  
38 roles, among others (O'Hare & O'Donohue, 1998). These signaling systems are often  
39  
40 implemented via the company's monitoring mechanisms and, in particular, by training  
41  
42 managers to detect potential risks (Dobbin & Kelly, 2007).  
43  
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46 From the victim/organization orientation, the SH problem does not differ much  
47  
48 from other moral hazard situations in which the agent (harasser) tries to exploit  
49  
50 asymmetries of information to pursue his or her objectives. In response, the firm monitors  
51  
52 its performance and tries to reduce the asymmetry through signaling. However, the  
53  
54 harasser/environment approach treats SH, not as a moral hazard but as a problem of adverse  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 selection, wherein control and prevention mechanisms focus on the effective detection of  
4  
5 harassers.

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8 We understand that early identification of harassment behavior is the key to  
9  
10 prevention. Advances in information and communication technologies can simplify the  
11  
12 screening and selection of personnel. The selection processes of private organizations  
13  
14 commonly involve integrity and personality tests to predict negative workplace behaviors  
15  
16 such as absenteeism or substance abuse but are not typically used to screen for potential  
17  
18 sexual harassers. While no such tests have been specifically developed to assess SH  
19  
20 tendencies, Greathouse et al. (2015) highlight that certain personality traits have been  
21  
22 linked to the proclivity to harass, suggesting that current tests might be used to detect  
23  
24 harassers before they enter the organization.  
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27  
28 Among these tests, the LSH scale (Pryor, 1987) contains ten hypothetical scenarios  
29  
30 in which the participant is asked to imagine that he is a male with power over an attractive  
31  
32 female subordinate and anonymously rate, on a 5-point Likert scale, the likelihood that he  
33  
34 will engage in acts of SH. In each of the ten scenarios, three different items require  
35  
36 participants to estimate the likelihood that the man will ask his female colleague for sexual  
37  
38 favors, and the responses are totaled to provide an overall LSH score. The reliability and  
39  
40 validity of this scale are well established (Pryor & Meyers, 2000), making it an effective  
41  
42 way of predicting whether the applicant is disposed to SH.  
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46  
47 An alternative is to deploy personality tests—with the proviso that organizations  
48  
49 using non-validated tests risk being sued for discrimination. Previous analyses of the  
50  
51 characteristics of sex offenders have found they score highly for neuroticism and lower for  
52  
53 extraversion (Becerra-García et al., 2013). Furthermore, the relationship between the LSH  
54  
55 scale and the Big Five personality test has previously been validated (Costa & McCrae,  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 1985), suggesting the potential utility of general personality tests for identifying traits  
4  
5 common among harassers.

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8 A third approach is simply for NPO recruiters to directly ask applicants whether  
9  
10 they have a history of SH. Such background checks are a legal and common practice in  
11  
12 other organizations but are very rare in NPOs. Applicants may seek to deceive interviewers  
13  
14 and only a small percentage are likely to confess to having engaged in SH (Atwater et al.,  
15  
16 2019), but their attitudes may still be gauged using this line of questioning. In suspicious  
17  
18 cases, the NPO may inform applicants about the organization's intolerance of SH to  
19  
20 encourage potential harassers to withdraw their applications. The element of intuition is  
21  
22 especially important for NPOs since the CVs of candidates generally avoid mentioning  
23  
24 problems encountered in other companies (e.g., several instances of the person being  
25  
26 dismissed). Therefore, the availability of specialist staff who can detect suspicious behavior  
27  
28 at interviews is strongly advised.  
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32  
33 Fourth, as we have explained, hardcore harassers may join an NPO for the sole  
34  
35 purpose of harassment and may, therefore, display little commitment to the organization's  
36  
37 mission. An organization could assess each applicant's commitment to its mission fairly  
38  
39 easily (at least more easily than his or her sexual behavior). In cases when a staff member's  
40  
41 reasons for joining the NPO are unclear or their participation in activities is inconsistent,  
42  
43 organizations may need to strengthen their monitoring to avoid undesirable behavior.  
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47 Although these selection mechanisms are well-researched predictors of sexual  
48  
49 behavior, they are rarely applied to organizations in general and NPOs in particular. Only a  
50  
51 few—such as the US Air Force—have developed selection procedures specifically to  
52  
53 identify the risk of sexual assault (Matthews, 2017). When someone expresses an interest in  
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55 joining the Air Force, its recruitment specialists screen individuals for particular  
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3 characteristics (AFRS Instruction 36-2001, 2012). The process begins by informally  
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5 assessing candidates' citizenship, morale, prior service, drug use, and dependents. Second,  
6  
7 the recruiter collects information on their use of narcotics, and any history of rape, indecent  
8  
9 assault, or SH (Loh et al., 2005). This information enables the risk of aggression from  
10  
11 candidates to be estimated, and those who constitute an excessive risk are excluded from  
12  
13 selection.  
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### 16 17 **Volunteers: from “no status” to employee status**

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19  
20 Volunteers are a vital human resource for NPOs. However, their rights and status  
21  
22 are inferior to employees of other organizations: for example, in the USA, they are  
23  
24 unprotected by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. The protection afforded by Title VII is  
25  
26 limited to “an individual hired as an employee” and is therefore only granted when some  
27  
28 form of remuneration is provided (Langton, 2014). Thus, the legal and institutional  
29  
30 protection of volunteers is comparable to that of victims randomly harassed on the street,  
31  
32 giving the harasser the opportunity to exploit the proximity of unequal relationships that  
33  
34 arise in organizations. In a recent essay, MacKinnon (2018) asserted that such “dynamics of  
35  
36 inequality have preserved the system in which the more power a man has, the more sexual  
37  
38 access he can get to coerce”. In this vein, she advocates an Equal Rights Amendment that  
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40 would expand sexual abuse legislation to ensure equality under the Constitution for all.  
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46 Similarly, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of  
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48 Women (UN Women; 2018) defined the basic elements of anti-harassment policy and  
49  
50 procedures and recommended extending the concept of unequal power relations in the  
51  
52 workplace to gender hierarchies. In particular, its second recommendation underlines that  
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54 these hierarchies are associated with other structural inequalities and require measures to  
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3 counteract “any other social vulnerabilities such as poverty that intensively target certain  
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5 groups for sexual aggression, use, and privilege their perpetrators for impunity on being  
6  
7 reported” (UN Women, 2018, p. 8). Accordingly, protecting and strengthening the status of  
8  
9 women affected by organizational inequalities and other social vulnerabilities must be  
10  
11 driven by policy and legislation.  
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14  
15 As explained above, volunteers are valued by organizations, their communities, and  
16  
17 society, so it seems right to grant them the same protection as employees and provide them  
18  
19 with broader protections under Title VII. Except for monetary compensation, NPOs and  
20  
21 volunteers are defined by the traditional functions of an employer-employee relationship.  
22  
23 Therefore, extending the Title VII protection to volunteers appears reasonable, based on the  
24  
25 understanding that the working relationship is established through participation rather than  
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27 compensation.  
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### 30 31 **Organizational structure: from bureaucracies to democracies**

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33 From the traditional perspective, the establishment of clear and effective procedures  
34  
35 to facilitate reporting is a key measure in the fight against SH (Colquitt, 2001).  
36  
37 Organizations are expected to establish internal rules, control mechanisms, and operating  
38  
39 procedures for reporting harassment. These are traditionally associated with the  
40  
41 bureaucracy that exists to guarantee victims’ rights in companies that strive to prevent SH.  
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45 However, bureaucracies have some general limitations, such as a lack of flexibility,  
46  
47 and can even be counterproductive for NPOs. Bureaucratic systems require fixed  
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49 procedures wherein all elements must be measurable and traceable, yet these very features  
50  
51 make them hard to achieve for NPOs, which typically act in conditions characterized by  
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53 instability and uncertainty (Crack, 2018). Furthermore, in weak organizational democracies  
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3 where females are marginalized (as may be the case for an NPO), formal procedures may  
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5 be too rigid to be truly effective (Gillespie, Mirabella & Eikenberry, 2019).  
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8         Moreover, the proliferation of various forms of non-standard working practices,  
9  
10 such as fixed-term (Tschirhart & Recascino, 2007) and extra-legal employment (McMullen  
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12 & Schellenberg, 2002), can undermine organizational democracy in the non-profit sector.  
13  
14 As a solution, King and Griffin (2019) advocate measures to improve organizational  
15  
16 democracy by, for example, involving all types of employees in collective decision-making  
17  
18 and adhering to virtues such as mutual respect and reciprocity. According to these authors,  
19  
20 focusing on internal democracy should enhance deontological and ethical action within the  
21  
22 organization, in turn boosting social and organizational mechanisms to counteract SH.  
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26         Along the same lines, but from a feminist perspective, it is argued that the role of  
27  
28 women in the non-profit sector is somewhat degraded. Teasdale et al. (2011) note that,  
29  
30 although women participate disproportionately in non-profits, they rarely occupy  
31  
32 governance positions. Sandoval (2018) states that, in the non-profit sector, power and  
33  
34 structural inequalities increase the risk of sexual violence against women employees and  
35  
36 aid recipients. We argue that the democratization of organizations and, in particular, the  
37  
38 incorporation of women into decision-making bodies may reduce the risk of SH in the  
39  
40 specific context of NPOs.  
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#### 44 **Organizational behavior: from training to empowerment**

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46         Many researchers hold that training is another means of combating SH, either by  
47  
48 raising awareness of SH (Bustamante & Golom, 2010), helping victims deal with the  
49  
50 consequences of harassment (Perry, Kulik & Field, 2009), making people aware that  
51  
52 unwanted gestures, comments or touching are a form of SH (Antecol & Cobb-Clark, 2003),  
53  
54 or helping managers to detect potential risk factors in harassment (Dobbin & Kelly, 2007).  
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3 Thus, many effective companies have introduced specialized training programs to protect  
4  
5 their workers from harassment (Entis, 2018).  
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8         However, other authors are more skeptical about the effectiveness of training. For  
9  
10 example, Walsh, Bauerle and Magley (2013) assert that the success of training is  
11  
12 conditioned by certain inhibitors such as the endorsement of myths surrounding SH or  
13  
14 organizational tolerance for SH . Furthermore, training alone may be insufficient,  
15  
16 particularly for NPOs, where implementing stable training programs may be impossible due  
17  
18 to high staff turnover. For this reason, training should be reinforced by other elements such  
19  
20 as promoting responsibility or autonomy, with the ultimate goal of empowering workers:  
21  
22 empowerment has been negatively correlated with the risk of being harassed in at least one  
23  
24 empirical study (Olló-López & Nuñez, 2018). Along the same lines, Schneider (1987)  
25  
26 observed that SH rates were lower in companies with decentralized decision-making  
27  
28 processes. Therefore, organizations that both train and empower their workers can reduce  
29  
30 their risk of harassment more effectively.  
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35         SH training can undoubtedly benefit NPOs, but its impact may be limited by the  
36  
37 characteristics of the workforce. However, the effectiveness of training can increase if, as  
38  
39 Gillespie et al. (2019) highlight, NPOs strengthen anti-harassment mechanisms by placing  
40  
41 the individual in context, changing norms and practices to empower women, and improving  
42  
43 communication mechanisms so the voice of the unprotected can be heard. In sum, NPO  
44  
45 managers should go beyond training and consider women's workplace roles,  
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47 responsibilities, and levels of autonomy.  
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### 51 **Information systems: from reporting to exchange**

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54         Reporting SH is a difficult and costly process for the victim, and sometimes delays  
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56 or even prevents harassers from being prosecuted (Bergman et al., 2002). Organizational  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 reporting mechanisms often rely on individual complaints and generally do not offer  
4  
5 alternatives to simplify the process (MacDermott, 2020). However, relying on individual  
6  
7 whistleblowing carries two clear risks. First, it can lead to under-reporting, particularly by  
8  
9 victims whose status is weak (as is the case in NPOs) and, second, it can delay  
10  
11 organizational responses to complaints. Such limitations are exemplified by Oxfam, which  
12  
13 is still considered a haven for harassers despite having the most effective SH reporting  
14  
15 system in the humanitarian aid sector (Eikenberry & Mirabella, 2020).  
16  
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19           In addition to formal, individual, and often confidential reporting procedures, the  
20  
21 role of other mechanisms that emphasize information sharing and exchange should not be  
22  
23 overlooked. Research into the roles of teams and bystanders in preventing harassment and  
24  
25 protecting victims has concluded that peer support greatly facilitates the reporting of SH  
26  
27 (Bowes-Sperry & O’Leary-Kelly, 2005). Powell (2011), for example, emphasized that  
28  
29 support is more effective when bystanders include managers and co-workers as well as  
30  
31 friends or family members. Bowes-Sperry and O’Leary-Kelly (2005) proposed a bystander  
32  
33 intervention model based on two parameters: immediacy and involvement. In an empirical  
34  
35 experiment, McDonald, Charlesworth, and Graham (2016) found that immediacy and  
36  
37 involvement were positively correlated with the strength of ties between victim and  
38  
39 bystander. Finally, the concept of organizational justice—based on fair decision-making  
40  
41 and the opportunity this affords for self-expression—can also enhance SH reporting in  
42  
43 organizations (Colquitt, 2001).  
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49           The networks of mutual support that characterize NPOs may aid the construction of  
50  
51 mechanisms of information transfer and exchange. Previous research has consistently  
52  
53 concluded that NPO workers are intrinsically motivated and share the organization’s goals.  
54  
55 As such, they are willing to accept lower compensation or exert greater efforts in the  
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workplace (Hansman, 1980; Mesch & Rooney, 2008). Francois (2001) notes that such employees tend to share their peers' drive to promote the organization's values or mission, strengthening their bonds of fraternity and fellowship.

### **Women's rights: from national to corporate**

Effectively combating the double victimization (both socioeconomic and sexual) of the many young and defenseless women whose livelihoods depend on nonprofits is, in our opinion, an urgent objective for NPO boards and policymakers. Indeed, this goal is captured by two of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals in its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: "End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere" (Goal 5.1) and "Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates worldwide" (Goal 16.2; Women and the Sustainable Development GoalsUN, 2018).

To this end, many efforts have rightly focused on reducing discrimination against women in countries where it is most severe. The Development Impact Assessment (i2i) program, for example, advocates combating discrimination by reinforcing gender identity in these settings. However, improving women's access to social goods such as education and healthcare is necessary but not sufficient, since it will have a limited effect on discrimination wherever the prevailing culture prevents women from accessing jobs or positions of power (Morrison & Jütting, 2005).

In any case, policies to reduce discrimination against women in developing countries are not dependent on the decisions of NPOs (although they may well be linked to NPOs' activities in a broader sense) so a focus on the corporate context is recommended. Specifically, we propose that, in order to avoid the effect of national cultures and legislation that are more tolerant of discrimination, NPOs should act corporately against SH. That is, female staff working for organizations in countries where women's rights are less

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 developed should receive the same level of protection as women employed at the NPO's  
4 headquarters, for example. Along these lines, Asgary and Mitschow (2002) advocate the  
5 adoption of corporate codes of ethics that preserve the integrity of workers regardless of  
6 where operations are carried out.  
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11  
12 Table 1 summarizes the policy implications of the proposed approach to tackling  
13 SH. The first column shows the actions currently taken from the victim/organization  
14 orientation, while the second column proposes how these policies can evolve to combat  
15 sexual harassment in nonprofits more effectively.  
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21 [Insert Table 1 around here]  
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### 24 **Implications for NPOs**

#### 25 **Ensuring the efficient governance of social issues**

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27 It is important to note that reputation and trust are crucial for NPOs. These  
28 organizations are not market-oriented enterprises, so any loss of trust from the public  
29 cannot be offset by the quality or price of their services or products. Private donors and  
30 governments will make their funding decisions based almost exclusively on trust. To  
31 underline this point, it is worth comparing the nonprofit sector with its polar opposite, the  
32 entertainment industry. SH scandals of equal or greater magnitude regularly break across  
33 the film industry, for instance, but sanctions are confined to individuals, rather than  
34 companies or the entire industry.  
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47 In the entertainment sector, a company's success depends fundamentally on the  
48 traditional quality/price balance of its products, which may offset the negative effect of  
49 harassment, however widespread and visible it is. When a scandal breaks, most consumers  
50 penalize neither entertainment companies nor the harassers they employ but continue to  
51 purchase the companies' products if they enjoy them. In contrast, no such product/market  
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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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3 exists in the non-profit sector, so the future viability of NPOs is crucially dependent on  
4  
5 transparency and trust.

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8         Moreover, damage to the reputation and trust of NPOs may not only impact  
9  
10 unresolved social problems such as hunger or climate change but also economic efficiency.  
11  
12 In this regard, Luo and Kaul (2019) emphasized that NPOs are advantaged over other  
13  
14 companies due to their fiduciary role in safeguarding public and private interests in the  
15  
16 governance of social issues. The authors argue that NPOs more efficiently minimize the  
17  
18 costs of transactions involving large ex-post asymmetries, such as those for altruistic or  
19  
20 social goods, i.e., when service users do not pay for what they receive. Moreover,  
21  
22 Ballesteros and Gatignon's (2019) analysis of responses to major natural disasters in 2003  
23  
24 and 2015 showed that NPOs may be effective private sector fundraisers. The authors found  
25  
26 that private companies preferred to donate to relief programs managed by NPOs rather than  
27  
28 help victims directly. These findings suggest that the experience of NPOs in the governance  
29  
30 of social issues may improve the effectiveness of the transfer between donors and aid  
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32 recipients.  
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**NPOs need to signal their compromise**

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40         Increasing measures to combat SH may not be enough to restore public confidence  
41  
42 in NPOs. The dramatic loss of credibility may require nonprofits to signal their efforts more  
43  
44 concerted to avoid permanent reputational harm. In this regard, it is important to  
45  
46 underline that the self-selection of the harasser in NPOs, partly occurs due to both  
47  
48 organizational dysfunction and exogenous conditions. Thus, accusations that the alleged  
49  
50 dysfunctionality of NPOs is solely responsible for failing to prevent SH may be  
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52 unwarranted, or at least excessive.  
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3 In this regard, NPOs may well be subject to informational asymmetries, wherein  
4 external agents are aware of SH cases but not the efforts made to counteract harassment in  
5 the organization, thereby rendering futile such efforts to regain the trust of stakeholders.  
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9  
10 Gugerty (2009) highlights the potential of standard-setting programs to address  
11 informational asymmetries between NPOs and stakeholders. Informational asymmetries are  
12 common in market-oriented activities and are reduced by signaling mechanisms. Generally,  
13 companies signal their quality assurance efforts by using widely recognized standards such  
14 as the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards for products or their  
15 Occupational Health and Safety Assessment Series (OHSAS) equivalents for safety. These  
16 remove the need for consumers or workers to evaluate the companies' efforts; we argue that  
17 NPOs may also benefit from signaling their anti-SH systems and procedures via  
18 independent auditing and certification. For example, in the area of occupational health and  
19 safety, the new ISO 45001 standard implemented in other industries evaluates anti-  
20 harassment measures and is applicable to nonprofit organizations.  
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### 35 **Future research**

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37 As explained above, research to date has focused on analyzing SH from the  
38 perspective of the victim and the organization, with correspondingly little attention paid to  
39 the behavior of harassers. This deficit is explicable when informational asymmetries are  
40 considered, since workplace SH data are generally provided by the victim or their close  
41 associates, such as bystanders or managers. This contributes to the massive asymmetry of  
42 information noted by Atwater et al. (2019), who show that only 5% of men recognize that  
43 they have participated in SH, while 60% of women say they have experienced it. In most  
44 cases, the relevant data are obtained from anonymous surveys and/or individual interviews  
45 in which the victim and their co-workers describe the organizational circumstances of  
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3 harassment (Ilies et al., 2003). Because analysis centers on the victim rather than the status,  
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5 behavior, or strategy of harassers, the managerial literature lacks information on the  
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7 harassment from the perpetrator's viewpoint, creating a significant overall research bias.  
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10 To prevent SH, it is important to develop more consistent and systematic research to  
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12 unravel the strategies of harassers. In turn, it is critical to identify high-risk environments,  
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14 other than non-profit organizations, in which harassers may have more chances to engage in  
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16 harassment and thus self-select. For example, SH is a clear concern in organizations such as  
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18 the Catholic Church, the military, the police, the entertainment industry, and universities.  
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20 and analysis of these organizations' organizational dysfunctions or attractiveness to  
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22 harassers may be key to implementing effective measures. Interestingly, like NPOs, all the  
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24 above organizations feature clear hierarchies that separate those in control from their staff  
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26 or recipients of their services (e.g., priest and practitioner, soldier and civilian, director and  
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28 actor, professor and student).  
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33 Finally, some novel perspectives on organizational behavior may challenge the  
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35 traditional victim/organization orientation to SH, as we have explained. For example,  
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37 Graso, Reynolds and Grover (2020) highlight the risk of sanctifying victimhood and  
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39 describe how a culture of avoiding harm can negatively affect organizational harmony in  
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41 the long run. Stouten et al. (2019) also discuss the value of silence in organizations and how  
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43 this might even benefit employees and organizations in some circumstances. These  
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45 provocative new approaches to dealing with unethical or illegal actions may substantially  
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47 transform the debate about how best to protect the victims of SH, thereby opening up  
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49 interesting new avenues of research.  
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### **Conclusion**

This paper has discussed and analyzed the problem and implications of SH in NPOs. By spotlighting the perpetrators rather than the victims of abuse, and arguing against the view that their behavior results purely from the organizational dysfunctionality of NPOs, we open up a promising line of research into counteracting harassment in nonprofit workplaces. Our analysis entails that the operational environments of many NPOs differentiate them from other organizations and may increase levels of SH despite every effort made to combat the problem. Therefore, we have highlighted the ineffectiveness of conventional anti-harassment measures and propose a portfolio of new policy measures adapted to the reality of NPOs.

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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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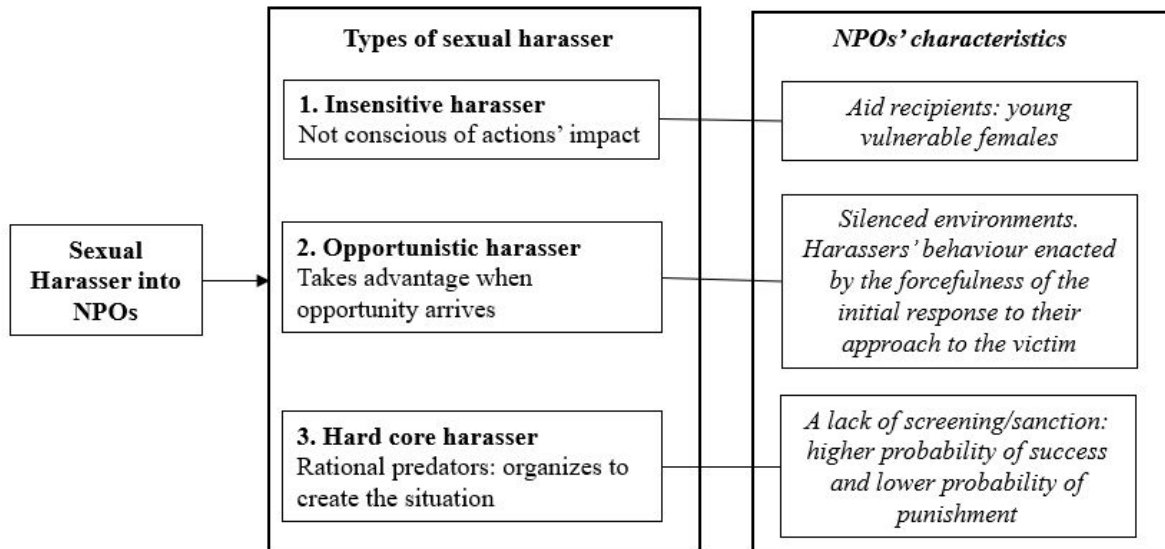
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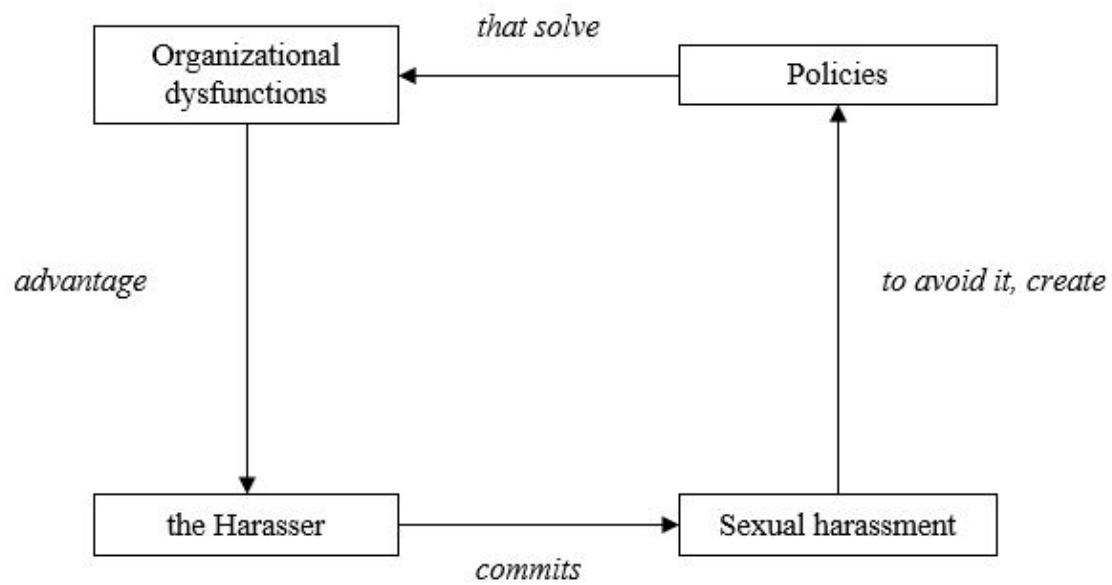
## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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**Figure 1***Why harassers join NPOs*

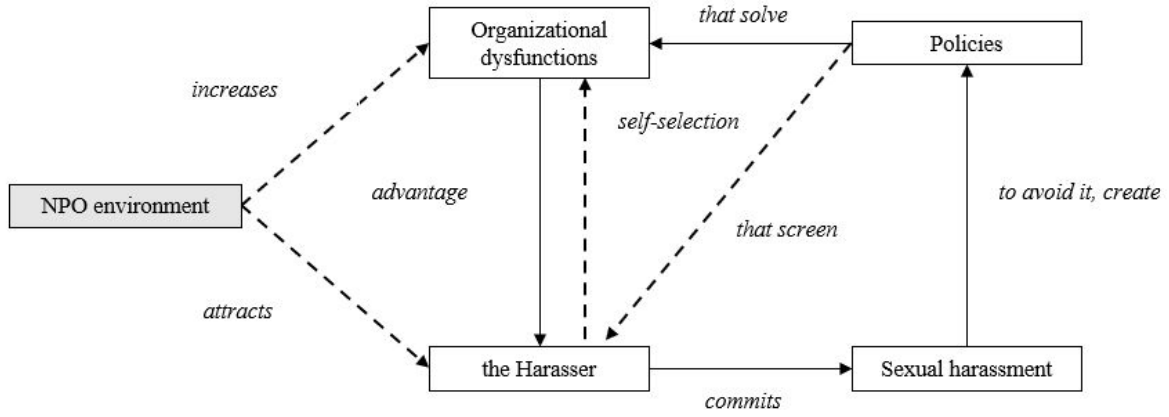
## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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**Figure 2***Traditional approach: Victim/organization orientation*

**Figure 3**

*The harasser/environment approach of SH*



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## SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN NPOs

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**Table 1***Policy implications: From victim/organization to harasser/environment*

<b>HRM policies</b>	
<b><i>From signaling</i></b>	<b><i>To screening</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the risks that lead to SH</li> <li>2. Communicate and prevent risks</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply detection mechanisms to anticipate the harasser's actions:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Likelihood to Sexually Harass Scale</li> <li>2. Validated personality test</li> <li>3. Hire professionals specialized in SH</li> <li>4. Check the commitment to the NPO mission</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Volunteers</b>	
<b><i>From no status</i></b>	<b><i>To status</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not employees</li> <li>2. Not covered by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grant volunteers the status of employees to receive Title VII protection:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote the Equal Rights Amendment.</li> <li>2. Control gender hierarchies in organizations.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Organizational structure</b>	
<b><i>From bureaucracies</i></b>	<b><i>To democracies</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Internal rules</li> <li>2. Control mechanisms</li> <li>3. Operative reporting procedures</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen organizational democracy to enhance deontological and ethical action:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Involve all types of employees in collective decision-making.</li> <li>2. Incorporate women in decision-making bodies.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Organizational behavior</b>	
<b><i>From training</i></b>	<b><i>To empowerment</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raise awareness of SH.</li> <li>2. Help deal with consequences of SH.</li> <li>3. Prepare managers to detect potential risk of SH.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complement SH training with measures to promote the autonomy and strengthen the authority of women:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage a collective response against all violence and gender domination.</li> <li>2. Improve communication to give voice to the undefended.</li> <li>3. Raise awareness that everyone is part of the problem and the solution.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Information systems</b>	
<b><i>From reporting</i></b>	<b><i>To exchange</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individual formal reporting</li> <li>2. Confidential handling</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a favorable climate for reporting and information exchange:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bring in the bystander.</li> <li>2. Reinforce organizational justice by generating bonds based on solidarity.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Women's rights</b>	
<b><i>From national</i></b>	<b><i>To global</i></b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cultural disparities regarding discrimination</li> <li>2. National legislation against SH</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a framework for action against SH that is applicable to the entire organization:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt a corporate code of ethics.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

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3  
4 Dear Professor Marie Louise Mors,  
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6  
7 Thank you very much for considering this manuscript to deserve further consideration. We are  
8 enormously grateful for the opportunity to improve this article and the valuable recommendations  
9 provided by the reviewers. We do sincerely appreciate the valuable time you have spent while  
10 assessing our work.  
11

12  
13 Hoping this new version fulfills reviewers' wishes, we submit the revised article and the requested  
14 point-by-point response to reviewers' comments.

15 The new version of the manuscript includes the main changes regarding your comments, and  
16 reviewers' comments are highlighted. We reproduce the original statements made by you in bold  
17 characters.  
18

19  
20 Once again, thank you very much for having granted us this opportunity.  
21

22  
23 We look forward to hearing from you soon.  
24

25 **Let me focus this letter on the two main concerns that you must address in your revision:**  
26

- 27  
28 **1. Reviewer 2 points out – and I agree with this observation – that the contribution**  
29 **regarding the NPO environment needs to be alluded to earlier in the manuscript. This is**  
30 **of course also central to your paper as it also relates to the policy implications and**  
31 **recommendations. Hence it is a nice opportunity for you to tie the front end and the**  
32 **back end of the paper more closely together.**  
33  
34

35 To emphasize the contribution and highlight the characteristics of the NPO environment, we  
36 performed the following changes.  
37

- 38  
39 1. In the Abstract, we mention the three characteristics of the NPO environment that, in our  
40 opinion, make SH more likely.  
41  
42 2. We have also deleted (from the Abstract) a confusing reference to previous literature on  
43 the organizational characteristics of NPOs. These potentially dysfunctional elements are  
44 explained in the text but are not a novelty. We believe that the new version of the Abstract  
45 is more precise in terms of the contribution and interest of the paper.  
46  
47 3. At the suggestion of the editor and reviewer, we have included a paragraph (penultimate)  
48 in the Introduction that succinctly describes the factors that shape the NPO environment.  
49  
50 4. We thought it appropriate to include a new reference on the topicality of the SH problem  
51 in the NPOs. Specifically, we refer to the United Nations report on the abuses in the  
52 Republic of Congo during the Ebola epidemic from 2018 to 2020 (3rd paragraph in the  
53 introduction section).  
54  
55 **2. Both reviewers have picked up on small mistakes in the manuscript. I would encourage**  
56 **you to once again work with a professional editor to ensure that the manuscript is not**  
57 **only thoroughly proofread to avoid such imprecision, but also corrected for any spelling**  
58 **mistakes or grammatical errors.**  
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6 To improve the readability of the document and to correct mistakes, following your comment, this  
7 version of the manuscript has been sent to the professional editor services that we have found in  
8 the AMP journal website. We attach the certificate, and we apologize for the mistakes in the  
9 previous version.  
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6 **Reviewers' Comments to Author:**

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9 **Reviewer 1:**

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11 **Thank you for a well-done revision. I have only one minor comment. The new table on page 51**  
12 **from recruiting to empowerment...I don't know what place individual in context or enhance**  
13 **accountability for the task mean. Can you explain better please.**  
14 **Also, there is an unnecessary who page 3 line 22.**

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16  
17 Dear Reviewer,

18  
19  
20 We appreciate the positive assessment of our work. Likewise, we would like to express our  
21 gratitude for the effort made to revise, again, our paper and to provide valuable feedback.

22  
23  
24 Regarding your comment, we have changed the Empowerment section of Table 1 where some of  
25 the suggestions were very unclear. We believe that the phrases in the new version are much more  
26 eloquent.

27  
28 Also, following your minor comment, we have corrected the mistake that you highlighted. In order  
29 to avoid more mistakes in the new version of the manuscript and to improve the readability of the  
30 document, this version of the manuscript has been sent to the professional editor services that we  
31 have found in the AMP journal website. We attach the certificate, and we apologize for the  
32 mistakes in the previous version.  
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7 **Reviewer 2:**

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9 **Dear Authors:**

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11 **I was grateful for the opportunity to review AMP-2020-0028.R4, Sexual Harassment in Nonprofit**  
12 **Organizations: Organizational Dysfunction or Harasser’s Behavior?. I express my sincere**  
13 **appreciation for the seriousness with which you engaged my comments on this revision. I found**  
14 **the manuscript much improved; my primary concerns have largely been resolved.**

15  
16 **If I were to make one additional recommendation, it would be to foreshadow (to a greater**  
17 **degree), in the introduction of the manuscript, the “Exogenous factors... that are not**  
18 **controllable by the organizations and that affect the behavior of harassers” (pp. 13 – 14). In my**  
19 **mind, this is where your manuscript truly makes a novel contribution. I nearly gave up on the**  
20 **manuscript, waiting 13 pages before getting to the substance of the paper. I am not**  
21 **recommending a large restructuring of the paper, but merely adding a glimpse in the first couple**  
22 **of pages about what is to come on page 13.**

23  
24 **On a minor note, the title of Figure 1 (p.48) says “joint,” which I believe should read “join.”**

25  
26  
27 Dear Reviewer,

28  
29  
30 We appreciate the positive assessment of our work. Likewise, we would like to express our  
31 gratitude for the effort made to revise, again, our paper and to provide valuable feedback. We are  
32 also grateful for the work you have done in reaching a decision.

33  
34  
35 Following your main comment, in order to emphasize the contribution and to not wait 13 pages  
36 before getting to the substance of the paper, we performed the following changes.

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39 1) In the Abstract, we mention the three characteristics of the NPO environment that, in our  
40 opinion, make SH more likely.
- 41 2) We have also deleted (from the Abstract) a confusing reference to previous literature on  
42 the organizational characteristics of NPOs. These potentially dysfunctional elements are  
43 explained in the text but are not a novelty, so we believe that the new version of the  
44 Abstract is more precise in terms of the contribution and interest of the paper.
- 45 3) At the suggestion of the editor and reviewer, we have included a paragraph (penultimate)  
46 in the Introduction that succinctly describes the factors that shape the NPO environment.
- 47 4) We thought it appropriate to include a new reference on the topicality of the SH problem  
48 in the NPOs. Specifically, we refer to the United Nations report on the abuses in the  
49 Republic of Congo during the Ebola epidemic from 2018 to 2020 (3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph in the  
50 introduction section).

51  
52  
53 We hope this new version fulfils your comment.

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56 Also, following your minor comment, we have corrected the mistake that you highlighted. In order  
57 to avoid more mistakes in the new version of the manuscript and to improve the readability of the  
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