

2020

## Mediating Effects of Workplace Sanctions on the Relationship between Knowledge Work and Psychological Wellbeing

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# Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Selena Perkins Pitt

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Walden University  
2020

Abstract

Mediating Effects of Workplace Sanctions on the Relationship between Knowledge

Work and Psychological Wellbeing

by

Selena Perkins Pitt

MA, Walden University, 2017

BS, Regent University, 2015

Dissertation

Doctor of Philosophy

Industrial-Organizational Psychology, Consulting Psychology

School of Psychology

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## Abstract

This quantitative associational correlational non-experimental study used multiple regression analysis with mediation to address the research question: To what extent employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions mediate the relationship between the 4 modes of the SECI (socialization, externalization, combination, internalization) knowledge creation model and psychological wellbeing. The study was based on the theoretical underpinnings of knowledge creation theory and the precepts of knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior that requires intentionality from the knowledge worker. The study explored the direct and indirect effects of the intercorrelations between the predictors, mediator, and outcome variables with 109 participants. The model summary of the outcome variable wellbeing is the multiple regression of the 4 KMP (knowledge management process) subscales and Perception (the mediator) predicting wellbeing. The model was statistically significant explaining 22.9% of the variance in wellbeing,  $F(5, 101) = 6.01$ ,  $R = .48$ ,  $p < .001$ . The study provided insight into the efficacy of the SECI model in the development of sexual harassment practices in the workplace when the employee perception of workplace sexual harassment practices was considered. This insight is useful for I-O practitioners when creating knowledge involving workplace sexual harassment practices that are employee-centric. Recommendations for future research include examining the role of other predictors such as accessibility, and employee engagement in the mediation model and studies at sites with more advanced forms of sexual harassment practices, policies and procedures that align with those in the literature.

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## Dedication

This work is dedicated to my family, my husband, Spencer Pitt, daughter Joy Ruffin, brother Choyce Perkins, sister Christina Perkins Williams, my dad Theodore Perkins, mom, father-in-law and mother-in-law John and Vernice Pitt, and my Uncle Joe. You all have been a fortress and foundation upon which I could depend in my most challenging times. You have also been those who have cheered for and rejoiced with me when all was well. I dedicate this life's goal to you. Love you always. To my ancestors, my angels, my grandmothers, Jacqueline Carwell and Daisy Dawson, I did it and I know that you are proud of me. To Mrs. Nellie Alston, although I never had the privilege of meeting you in person, I know that you were an ancestor and spiritual guide during my journey. We did it!

Love always,

Selena Perkins Pitt

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## Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

### **Introduction**

The topic of this study is how knowledge in workplace sexual harassment practices may impact psychological wellbeing. My goal was to explore if the relationship between knowledge work and psychological wellbeing is mediated by the employee's perception of their organization's workplace sexual harassment practices. This chapter is organized into seven sections. The problem statement is included in the introduction, followed by the purpose and significance of the study. The background provides an overview of relevant research as it relates to major themes in the study. The theoretical framework, research questions, nature of the study and types of data are followed by the limitations and assumptions and finally a summary.

McDonald (2012) conducted a literature review on workplace sexual harassment over the past 30 years. The research highlights that workplace sexual harassment affects individual and organizational outcomes of workplace sanctions (Fassinger, 2008; Quick & McFayden, 2017; McDonald, 2012, Twing & Williams, 2010). Organizations have increased their internal efforts to expand their anti-sexual harassment practices and ensure that those sanctions comply with federal and state legislation, protect the organization from liability, and protect the rights of employees while in the workplace (Fassinger, 2008; Testy, 2002; Twing & Williams, 2010). However, McDonald (2011) asserted that the literature overwhelmingly demonstrates that "the development of organizational strategies to prevent sexual harassment has been less than effective" (p. 11). Failed organizational efforts to protect employees from the emotional damages of

workplace sexual harassment and employees' perceived levels of procedural injustice both affect psychological well-being (Francis and Barling, 2005; Jieng et al., 2015; McLaughlin, Uggen and Blackstone, 2012). Employee/employer competing interests, and complications around grievances and complaints are factors that contribute to the employees' perception of workplace anti-sexual harassment sanctions (McDonald's, 2012; Quick & McFayden, 2017). Anti-sexual harassment practices should be designed specifically to address psychological stress (Nishii & Wright, 2008; Quick & McFayden, 2017). The question is, how then does perception of anti-sexual harassment practices influence knowledge of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions that are created and managed in a way that impacts psychological well-being.

Hertzog et al. (2008) asserted that workplace policies and procedures that are designed to prevent sexual harassment occurrences are modeled after organizational representations of measurable interpersonal relations and organizational structures. However, the literature lacks research on exploring whether individual and organizational outcomes are the result of how those practices are created and transferred throughout the organization or how effectively employers are managing the knowledge around those practices that will then affect psychological well-being (Hertzog et al., 2008). Based on Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) SECI model of knowledge work, the way in which the workplace policies and procedures are designed for interpersonal relations is a socialized form of using workplace sanctions as an organizational behavior.

Organizational knowledge of anti-sexual harassment practices is often created through policies, procedures, resources, corporate compliance programs, and training.

However, the literature suggests that organizations do not fully understand (a) the effective knowledge of workplace anti-sexual harassment practices are being created and managed, (b) the effect of these practices on employee perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions and their effect on psychological well-being, and (c) whether employee perception of the workplace sanctions affects the relationship (McDonald, 2012). There is value in exploring the direct and indirect effects of the mediating role of employee perception of workplace sanctions on the relationship between knowledge work and psychological wellbeing (McDonald, 2012). The problem that I addressed in this study was that the scholarly community does not know the extent to which the relationships of knowledge work with psychological wellbeing is mediated by perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this quantitative, non-experimental study was to examine the extent to which perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions mediates the relationship between knowledge work and psychological well-being. Using a survey method of inquiry, the I addressed the question of whether employee perception of their employers' anti-sexual harassment practices affected the relationship between the way those practices are created and managed and psychological well-being. My goal was to clarify the mediating role of employee perception of workplace sanctions in the relationship of a SECI model of knowledge management as an organizational behavior and its effect on psychological well-being.



### **Significance**

The results of the study may be used by the research community to understand the mediating role of perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions on the relationship between knowledge work and psychological well-being. The results of this study may advance the literature on knowledge work as an organizational behavior by demonstrating the extent to which knowledge work influences people's perception of workplace sanctions. From a social change perspective, the research supports civil and human rights by providing the employee perspective on workplace values, treatment and employee well-being. The social justice implications of this study consider the voice of sexual minorities married with the wake of a large social movement(Gibson et al. 2019).The study presents information for the industrial-organizational community regarding employing and globalizing enterprise-wide sanctions that are effective for application. The study provides information regarding whether the appropriate knowledge management conditions for transferring and creating knowledge around anti-sexual harassment practices are being managed in a way that could influence psychological well-being. The data captured about the mediating role of perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions may also inform ways to assess organizational development strategies around employee well-being by applying knowledge work as described in the study.

## **Background**

### **Policy and Anti-sexual Harassment Practices**

Zugelder et al. (2018) substantiate that employer's response to the #MeToo movement was to employ additional anti-harassment efforts including new regulations, reporting procedures and training. The article discusses an assessment of these efforts. Additionally, Williams, Fitzgerald, and Drasgow (1999) defined anti-sexual harassment practices as policies, procedures and practices to include formal or informal guidelines, grievance procedures, trainings and notices about new written policies. Furthermore, Jiang et al. (2015) captures the employee perspective of workplace sexual harassment and anti-sexual harassment practices by asserting that "perceived anti-sexual harassment practices represent an organization's prevailing stance on sexual harassment" (p. 3).

### **Knowledge Work and Knowledge Conversion Theory**

Song and Kolb (2009) incorporates the use of knowledge conversion theory and applies it to organizational knowledge creation and transfer processes. They asserted that knowledge conversion does not occur by learning or training alone but rather a combination of knowledge creation strategies that result in desired organizational behaviors. Spraggon and Bodolica (2011) provide taxonomy for inter-organizational knowledge transfer. The authors provide a framework for knowledge transfer processes based on relevant theoretical underpinnings. Lastly, J. H. Williams et al. (1999) observes anti-sexual harassment practices as a constant concept because it is the "individual's perceptions rather than the actual anti-sexual harassment practices that shape their job-related outcomes and psychological conditions" (p. 322).

## **Framework**

I used knowledge conversion SECI theory originally defined by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) as the theoretical framework for this study. SECI are the four modes of knowledge creation that lead to knowledge transfer (Nonaka, 1997). I used this theory as the framework for this study based on the construct of knowledge transfer using Nonaka's definition of knowledge conversion theory. Based on this definition, one can conjecture that knowledge created by organizations through anti-sexual harassment efforts can be translated into new organizational behaviors that lead to psychological well-being. Kelloway and Barling's (2000) definition of knowledge work includes four types of knowledge work mentioned earlier that serve as examples of the four processes of knowledge conversion. I based the theoretical underpinnings of the study on Kelloway and Barling's (2000) model of knowledge work as a discretionary behavior who assert that "the organization's task is to stimulate employee investment by creating the appropriate conditions" as discretionary behavior, the employee cannot be forced to learn or apply the knowledge.

## **Research Questions**

I sought to establish that knowledge work influences psychological well-being when mediated by perception of workplace sanctions. I addressed the following four research questions:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and

psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization?

Null Hypothesis ( $H_01$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_a1$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will fully mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and internalization?

Null Hypothesis ( $H_02$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of combination, internalization and socialization.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_a2$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will partially mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and internalization.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, socialization, and internalization?

Null Hypothesis ( $H_03$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, internalization and socialization.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_a3$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, socialization, and internalization.

Research Question 4 (RQ4): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and socialization?

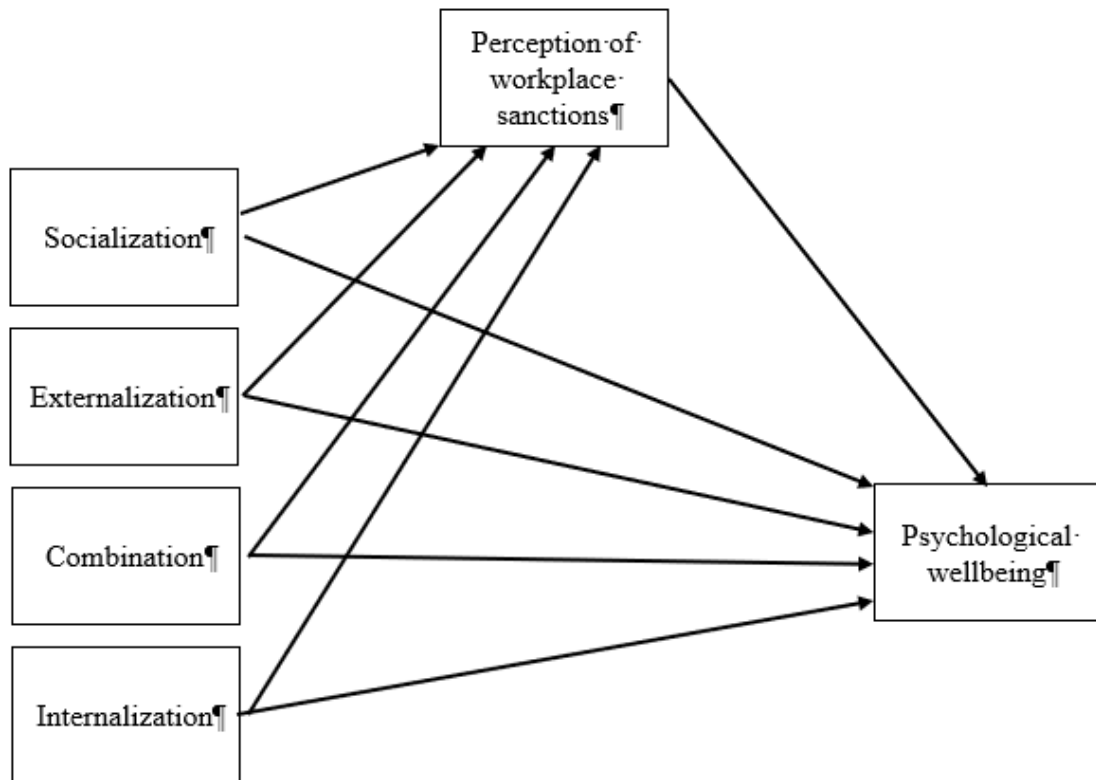
Null Hypothesis ( $H_04$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of combination, externalization and socialization.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_a4$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores

and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and socialization.

### **Nature of the Study**

The nature of this study was quantitative. Quantitative research was consistent with the purpose of the study and I used statistical analysis and the mediation model to address the research questions. I used mediation regression analysis using the Hayes (2017) PROCESS add-in for Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). PROCESS was a suitable modeling tool for the study because it estimates direct and indirect effects in single mediator models and three-way interactions using bootstrapping. The independent variables of the study were SECI subscales of socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. The mediator variable was perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions and was measured at the interval level. Psychological well-being was measured at the interval level. I used the operational definitions (ODs) of SECI when contextualized by the types of knowledge work found in the literature by Nonaka (1998) and Kelloway and Barling (2000).



*Figure 1.* Conceptual model of mediating effect of perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions on the relationships between knowledge work (socialization, externalization combination, and internalization) and psychological wellbeing.

### **Possible Types and Sources of Information or Data**

The Perceptions of Organizational Sanctions Against Sexual Harassment Scale (Dekker & Barling, 1998) has been identified as a comparable instrument to measure perceptions of anti-sexual harassment practices. I used the Knowledge Conversion Process Questionnaire (Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal, 2001) to measure knowledge work. I measured psychological well-being using the Job-related Affective Wellbeing Scale (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, Kelloway, 1999). The method of inquiry was electronic questionnaires from male and female employees who work within companies

with established anti-sexual harassment practices. Participants self-reported gender, race, sexual orientation and their company's anti-sexual harassment practices. I have obtained permission to use the Perceptions of Organizational Sanctions Against Sexual Harassment Scale without fee. The questionnaires were distributed electronically to participants solicited from the general public.

### **Limitations, Challenges, and/or Barriers**

Due to the sociopolitical landscape surrounding #MeToo, sexual orientation was a critical variable to explore in this study. However, due to the recency of the emergent issue, sexual harassment in the workplace, the recommended research design in the literature for sexual orientation is ethnography or case study (Quick & McFayden, 2017) which are both qualitative methods. Therefore, sexual orientation was removed from this study.

I assumed that the respondents' organization had anti-sexual harassment practices in place that represent a combination of means of employing those practices, thereby meeting the operationalized definition of knowledge work in the study. A potential barrier to the study was that the anti-sexual harassment practices must comprise all of the components of Kelloway and Barling's (2000) definition of knowledge work to measure knowledge conversion. The definition of knowledge work and the study's theoretical framework of anti-sexual harassment practices as knowledge work presume the predictive relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Data regarding the various types of practices undertaken by the respondents' employer were captured through a question asking respondents to check all applicable practices



listed in the selection of responses. The responses included options from Kelloway and Barling's (2000) definition of knowledge work and used to conceptualize the SECI model of knowledge conversion.

### **Summary**

Chapter one included an overview of the topic of the study, the study purpose, and relevance to social and positive change. Chapter one also discussed the problem addressed and the gap in literature. This section included potential contributions of this study so that it would advance the knowledge in the organizational psychology industry and its limitations. The chapter also included types of data and analytical strategies. Lastly, chapter one contained basic assumptions and barriers. In Chapter two, I will delve deeply in the recent and relevant literature on the topic and the theoretical foundation.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### **Introduction**

Creating and implementing effective sexual harassment policies that achieve desired organizational and individual outcomes is a priority for employers (Chung, Seaton, Cooke, Ding, 2016). However, organizational efforts have historically failed to protect employees from the emotional damages of workplace sexual harassment, thereby affecting psychological wellbeing (McLaughlin, Uggen, & Blackstone, 2012). There is a gap in knowledge of the effects of employee perception of workplace sanctions on the relationship between knowledge work and psychological wellbeing. This research fills that void and contributes to the scholarly community's understanding of how psychological wellbeing is affected by the knowledge conversion process of workplace anti-sexual harassment practices when employee perception of workplace anti-sexual harassment sanctions is introduced to the relationship between knowledge work and wellbeing.

The literature review for this study sheds light on the knowledge work involved in creating the knowledge contained in workplace sexual harassment practices, employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions, and the interactions with psychological wellbeing. Knowledge conversion theory, knowledge work as an organizational behavior, and the effects of knowledge conversion on psychological wellbeing were discussed. I discuss key terms and variables as they relate to the research questions and hypotheses. The measurement instruments were introduced in the review as well.

### **Literature Search Strategy**

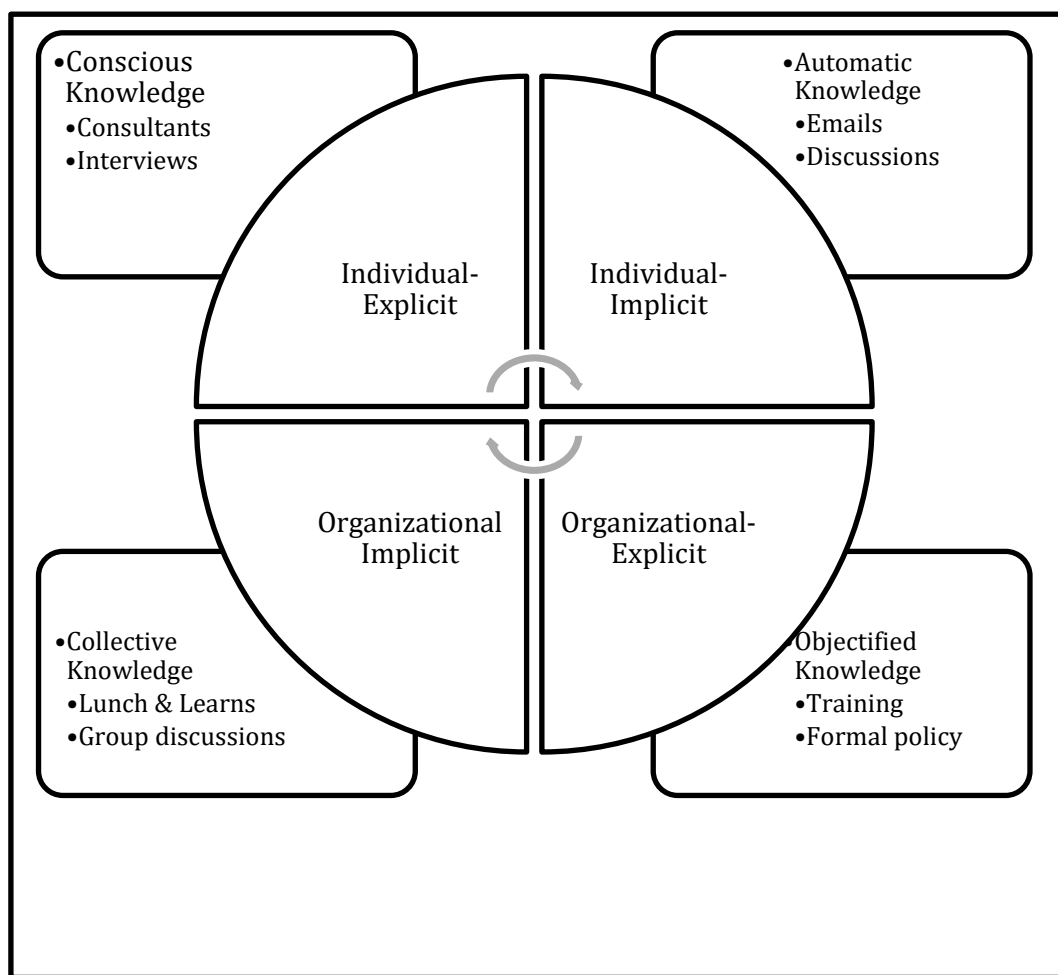
The literature used for this study was obtained through peer-reviewed journals, articles and books. The key databases searched were: Academic Search Complete, Business Source Complete, CINAHL & MEDLINE Combined Search, CINAHL Plus with Full Text, Cochrane Database of systemic reviews, EBSCO ebooks, Education Source, ERIC, Health and Psychosocial, Instruments, Mental Measurements Yearbook with Tests in Print, ProQuest Central, ProQuest Science Journals, PsychArticles, PsychBooks, PsychInfo, PsychTests & Health and Psychosocial Instruments Combined Search, SAGE Journals, Science Direct, SocINDEX with Full Text, Taylor & Francis online. The search terms used were: *sexual harassment, sexual harassment policies (practices), psychological wellbeing, organizational knowledge, knowledge work, knowledge conversion, knowledge creation, workplace sanctions, employee perception AND workplace sanctions, and workplace sexual harassment sanctions OR practices OR policies*. The research literature used was primarily from the past 10 years, apart from the literature on knowledge work, knowledge creation, knowledge conversion, and knowledge conversion theory. Although this literature dates as far back as 1986, it provides exhaustive theoretical origins relevant to the study. The research on the relationship between psychological wellbeing and knowledge conversion was limited. However, there were several resources to establish that an association exists. The literature review concludes with a summary of the relevant literature on the intersections of the key variables and topics covered in the chapter.

### **Theoretical Foundation**

Seeing that the various justifications for creating knowledge in the context of workplace sexual harassment practices in lieu of employee perception of workplace policies is obscure and difficult to understand in detail, I chose to adopt the concept of knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior proposed by Kelloway and Barling (2000) as well as Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) knowledge conversion theory to deepen the investigation of those aspects of knowledge creation that affect psychological wellbeing for this study.

Knowledge enables action and is the organization's principal means of organizational change. Nonaka defined knowledge as having two categories: tacit and explicit. Tacit knowledge, like organizational knowledge, is subjective. Tacit knowledge is rooted in a person's experiences but is not always easily expressed verbally. According to Nonaka (1997), this is also known as context-specific knowledge. Contrary to tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge is objective, rational, and can be expressed concretely. Explicit knowledge is context free in that it is expressed verbally. This study espouses Spender's (1996) knowledge classification which is grounded in Nonaka and Takeuchi's (1995) knowledge classifications. The knowledge taxonomy proposed by Spender (1996) makes a distinct, yet symbiotic relationship between tacit (implicit) and explicit knowledge and, between individual and organizational knowledge (Levallet & Chane, 2019). Spender posited three positions in his framework: (a) that knowledge has two types: implicit and explicit, (b) occurs at two levels: individual and organizational and, (c) flows interchangeably from implicit to explicit and from individual to organizational.

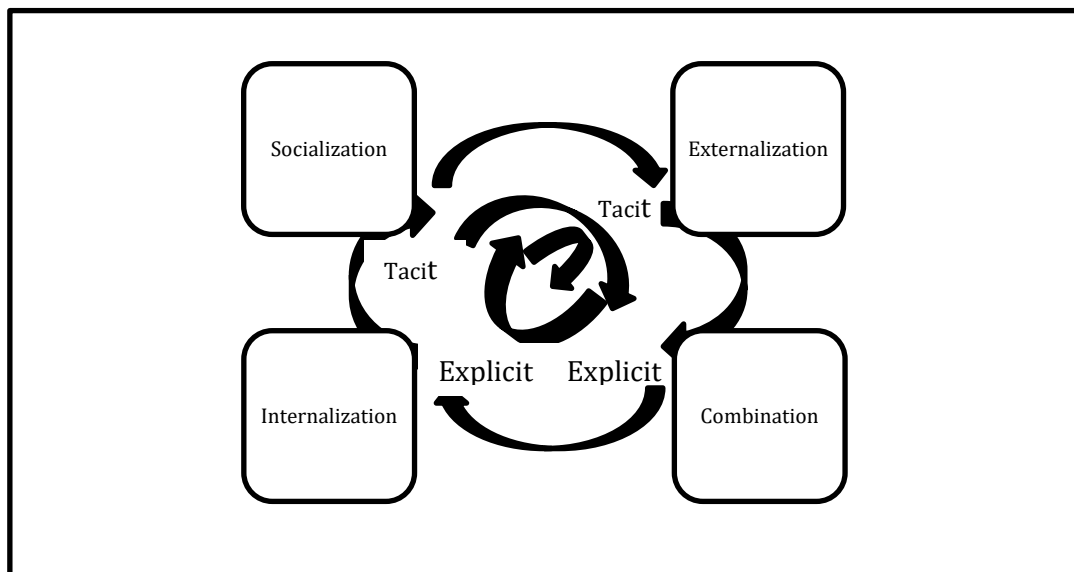
Figure 2 illustrates Spender's matrix of knowledge taxonomy and examples of knowledge embedded in workplace sexual harassment practices. The framework results in four knowledge classifications: conscious knowledge, automatic knowledge, objectified knowledge, and collective knowledge. These types of knowledge are discussed later in the literature review.



*Figure 2.* Spender's matrix of knowledge taxonomy and examples of knowledge embedded in workplace sexual harassment practices.

## Knowledge Conversion Theory

The controversy over the validity of the difference between individual and organizational knowledge is rooted in the fact that the individual is the knowledge holder. The knowledge creation and conversion process must begin with the individual thereby making these two levels of knowledge separate and apart (Anothayanon, 2006). This is further substantiated by the operational definition for organizational knowledge used later in the literature review. The distinction is that “individual knowledge is created, maintained, and utilized by an individual’s subjective sensemaking process while organizational knowledge comprises collective meanings and structures developed within the organization” (Nonaka, 1997). This symbiotic relationship implies that the knowledge creation process is cyclic and is generated from individual to organizational back to individual knowledge and; from tacit to explicit back to tacit knowledge. Figure 3 shows a model of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) knowledge classification and creation process.



*Figure 3.* Nonaka’s four modes of knowledge conversion occurs in a spiral pattern from tacit to explicit and back to tacit knowledge. The spiral pattern represents a continuous cycle of deeper levels of new knowledge.

Knowledge conversion theory focuses on the “how” question of creating knowledge. I used Nonaka and Takeuchi’s (1995) seminal work on knowledge creation and conversion theory as the theoretical foundation for this study. Its basic assumptions are that the learning process involves three levels of knowledge, passing through four phases from tacit to explicit knowledge and from the individual to the collective levels of learning (Anothayanon, 2006). Knowledge conversion theory is a series of processes that begins with the individual. As their knowledge expands and builds, it proceeds through several subdivisions within the process. One of the most tenets of knowledge conversion theory is that it is inherently subjective because knowledge includes human values and beliefs (Nonaka & Toyama, 2005). The knowledge work involved in creation, conversion and the intention to use the knowledge is based on the discretion of the knowledge worker or knowledge holder. The theory does not view knowledge as exclusively subjective. The conversion process requires socialization and synthesizing with others in order for that knowledge to expand and grow beyond an individual’s subjective reality. Contrary to former theoretical beliefs, knowledge conversion theory asserts that knowledge is fallible and incomplete. Nonaka and Toyama (2005) described this as a “social process of validating truth” (p. 422).

### **Knowledge Work Model**

The study presents Kelloway and Barling’s (2000) theory of knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior as a model. Knowledge work is known as the profession involving searching for current knowledge, creating new knowledge, sharing knowledge with others, and applying knowledge to a specific situation or in a specific

context (Davenport, Jarvenpaa, & Beers, 1995). Knowledge work originated in 1960 when researchers first introduced the concept to distinguish different classes of workers. Later, Peter Druker (1979) coined the term *knowledge workers* and it has seen tremendous industry growth. Knowledge work involves the work of engraining knowledge into the organizational culture, communications, infrastructure, and strategy (Ruggles, 1997). Kelloway and Barling (2000) identified three definitions of knowledge work in the literature: knowledge work as a “profession, a characteristic of individuals, and as an individual activity” p. 287). Knowledge work as a profession is best described as a list of occupations typically from the information technology fields (Dove, 1998). Knowledge work as an individual characteristic is defined as the individual’s creativity and innovative contributions to the organization (Kelloway & Barling, 2000). Knowledge work as an individual activity is best characterized as “the balance of thinking and doing activities” (Kelloway & Barling, 2000, p. 290). They have advanced the literature to include a fourth definition which is the model being used in this study.

The four stages of the SECI model of knowledge conversion and the model of knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior provide the theoretical underpinnings needed to address the research questions in this study. In the study, I conjecture that the intricacies of how knowledge is created is subjective involving emotions and beliefs, requires intentionality and engagement on behalf of the knowledge workers, and is intrinsically gratifying. Self-fulfillment, emotional affect, and employee engagement are all associated with psychological wellbeing (Suleman et al. 2018). Each stage of the SECI model provided more “how to” insight of the knowledge conversion



process. Since this research examined the direct and indirect effects of the mediator between knowledge work and psychological wellbeing, knowledge conversion theory's basic assumptions and the knowledge work model support the study and its implications for future research.

## **Literature Review**

### **Types of Knowledge**

Knowledge conversion involves various types of knowledge. Since this study is theoretically grounded in the conversion of one type of knowledge to another and it involves the effect of an organizational factor on an individual outcome, it is important to gain a deeper understanding of the various types of knowledge mentioned in the knowledge management literature. As mentioned above, Spender (1996) proposed an ontological typology of knowledge that resulted in four types. This section reviews Spender's definitions of conscious, automatic, objectified, and collective knowledge, and Nonaka's definitions of tacit and explicit knowledge.

**Conscious knowledge.** Conscious knowledge, also known as individual-explicit knowledge, is a person's expertise (Spraggon and Bodolica, 2011). It is active and can be easily leveraged by the organization and used by others. Common examples of workplace sexual harassment practices that capture or generate conscious knowledge are emails, employee records, executive briefs, policy releases, consultants.

**Automatic knowledge.** Automatic knowledge is individual-implicit knowledge (Spraggon and Bodolica, 2011). It is less active than conscious knowledge and best described as rudimentary or routine. This knowledge is not always easily accessible by

others in the organization. For instance, a human resource expert may draft grievance policies but overlook nuances such as submission instructions. Some common examples of workplace sexual harassment practices that captures or generates automatic knowledge are one on one interviews or discussions, videoconferencing, or emails.

**Objectified knowledge.** Objectified knowledge is organizational-explicit knowledge (Spraggon and Bodolica, 2011). This class of knowledge has been embedded into the organizational context and is being used by the knowledge holders. Common examples of workplace sexual harassment practices that captures or generates objectified knowledge are formal policies and procedures, employee manuals, grievance processes, and training.

**Collective knowledge.** Collective knowledge is organizational implicit knowledge (Spraggon and Bodolica, 2011). Collective knowledge is a “collective understanding that is valid in a specific organizational context” (Kivijarvi, 2004). This definition incorporates both social capital (knowledge embedded in socialization) and cultural knowledge (organizational habits) (Levallet & Chane, 2019). Organizational knowledge is a company’s most valuable intellectual asset. For some scholars, the collective knowledge of multiple knowledge workers present challenges for the knowledge creation and conversion process (Chung et al. 2016; Hong, 2011; Jelavic & Ogilvie, 2010;). Organizational knowledge is knowledge held by the individuals that is then embedded as new knowledge within the organization. The value of individual knowledge opposed to organizational knowledge to the organizational culture is yet to be argued. While knowledge at any level can be leveraged as an asset, it has its greatest

advantage for transformational impact when it is converted to organizational knowledge (Ahn & Hong, 2019).

Nonaka has an epistemological view of knowledge dimensions and would purport that there are two types of knowledge – tacit and explicit knowledge, occurring at three levels - individual, group, and organizational.

**Tacit knowledge.** Tacit knowledge is unwritten information that is embedded in beliefs, experience, worldviews, behaviors, patterns, images, intuition, and cognitive skills. It is the knowledge that is “understood” or “known” but not explicitly captured in concrete forms such as documents, formulas, or technology. As such, tacit knowledge according to Nonaka is intrinsically subjective and is automatically accompanied by context.

**Explicit knowledge.** Complimentary to tacit knowledge, explicit knowledge is easily captured and communicated. It is information that is clearly identifiable. Nonaka (1997) also called it “rational” knowledge (p. 1). It is objective and easily applicable. Explicit knowledge is the outcome of synthesized knowledge that is ready to be used by the organization.

Knowledge exists in several forms and functions at different levels – individual, group and organizational. The group level of knowledge conversion is relevant at specific stages of the conversion process. However, both Nonaka (1997) and Spender (1996) asserted that the group level of interaction is the entry point of the process and facilitates the outcome rather than produces one. This assertion means that new knowledge acquired at the group level is to be re-inserted into the process to produce new individual

knowledge and organizational knowledge. This is antitheoretical to the notion of the learning organization as made popular by Senge (2006) who believed that group knowledge is the outcome of knowledge management. Conversely, Nonaka's and Spender's knowledge types are not necessarily mutually exclusive., but rather inter-relational. They represent how various types of knowledge exist and interact with each other on different levels. The complexity that accompanies the conversion of various types of knowledge that occurs on different social levels justifies the need for knowledge management.

### **Knowledge Management**

Knowledge management began as a practice in the Information Technology sector (Anothayanon, 2006). It focused on creating channels to capture, store, and disseminate organizational knowledge. The fundamental precepts of knowledge management focused on tools and resources that functioned as the knowledge work. Business theorists consider knowledge management the nucleus of competitive advantage (Anantatmula, 2009; Chen & Mohamed, 2010; Gardner et al. 2012; Lin, Liu, Hsu & Wu, 2008). Drucker (1998) first described the emerging tech-based organization an Information-based business. This 'new' organization is one that is grounded in knowledge sharing of specialized workers who rely on feedback loops of information from various sources and stakeholders. Thus, according to early scholars, knowledge creation is a fundamental component of knowledge management.

In 1990, Peter Senge (2006) first introduced his signature topic, "the learning organization' which was made popular in the first edition of this book, *The Fifth*

*Discipline*. Senge (2006), believed that the learning organization is a place that embraces the organic development of new knowledge through the interaction and expertise of its knowledge workers. David Garvin (1998) would expand Senge's work on the learning organization by asserting that knowledge management is one of three precursors to becoming a learning organization. Garvin believed that the building blocks of knowledge management are distinctly characterized by the knowledge workers' perspective, resources, and behavioral patterns. Similar to Senge and Garvin, Nonaka (1997) advocated that knowledge creation is not idiosyncratic but rather a natural part of the organization's life cycle in which every knowledge worker plays a role.

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) proposed a model of knowledge management that required intentionality from those involved in both the knowledge creation and knowledge conversion process. That is to say that the knowledge holder does the knowledge work as opposed to relying exclusively on the means in which knowledge is managed. A prime example of the difference can be taken from the origins of Nonaka's knowledge management framework. Nonaka (1997) believed that there are five enablers for knowledge management – vision, strategy, structure, system, staff. These enablers are what contextualizes the knowledge conversion process with activities or functions that are conducive to each of the four knowledge transitions (SECI). According to (Nonaka, 1997) the following definitions apply to the five enablers

- A knowledge vision is “a working premise for knowledge” (p. 1)
- A knowledge strategy is “what conceptualizes the knowledge to be developed” (p. 1)

- A knowledge system is a “networking committee of knowledge to competitors, customers, related industries, regional communities and subsidiaries” (p. 2).
- A knowledge structure consists of “fractal organization and bureaucracy organization” (p. 2).
- Staff as an enabler stresses the importance of middle managers in the “Middle-Up-Down” process of knowledge transfer (p. 2).

The work involved in the knowledge management of workplace sexual harassment practices is an example of a knowledge strategy. To further explain the nuances of the knowledge creation process, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) created what they call the SECI (socialization, externalization, combination and internalization) model of knowledge conversion.

**The SECI model.** The Knowledge Conversion SECI model of: Socialization, Externalization, Combination, and Internalization explains the process from individual tacit knowledge to organizational explicit knowledge. Polanyi (1966) coined the term ‘personal knowledge’ which implies that knowledge resides with the individual but also the central tenet to organizational knowledge. Nonaka and Takeuchi’s (1995) SECI model builds on the concept of personal knowledge and asserted that knowledge creation is an interchangeable process of tacit and explicit knowledge conversion where new knowledge is created between the individuals and the organization. It is based on Nonaka’s (1994) cultural notion of ‘Ba’. Ba according to Nonaka (1994) are the conditions under which or space in which knowledge is created. Nonaka believed that

knowledge creation happened best under conditions that were conducive to the knowledge conversion process. These conditions included cultural and social contexts, behavioral conditions, time and physical space (Jelavic & Ogilvie, 2010; Nonaka, 1994). There are elements of Ba in each of the four modes of SECI enabling deeper knowledge at each level of engagement.

The SECI model of knowledge conversion is a “spiraling process of interactions between explicit and tacit knowledge” (Nonaka, 1997) to deepen knowledge at each level where new knowledge is created. Nonaka’s model supposes that existing knowledge can be either tacit or explicit, that each type of knowledge can be converted and that each mode of transfer operates differently (Nonaka, 1997)

***Socialization.*** Socialization is the level of knowledge creation that converts tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge. It occurs at the individual level and involves sharing tacit knowledge with others. This stage emphasizes joint activities and embedding knowledge through social interactions as opposed to written and verbal channels of communication. New knowledge creation at this stage often occurs through the “everyday social and cultural process linked to ongoing organizational activities” (Easa & Fincham, 2012). Socialization requires physical proximity, self-awareness and the willingness to share thoughts, ideas and experiences (Nonaka, 1997).

***Externalization.*** Externalization is the step in the knowledge conversion process whereby tacit knowledge is expressed and translated into communicative forms that can be applied by others. This step converts tacit to explicit knowledge. This step occurs at the team level and the individual becomes actively engaged in the knowledge creation

and conversion process by extending oneself and immersing oneself in the group (Nonaka & Kono, 1998). This stage uses intellectual abilities such as deductive and inductive reasoning as well as articulation and translation. The level of interaction that occurs within externalization creates knowledge that results in formal means of communication.

***Combination.*** Combination involves converting explicit knowledge to explicit knowledge. This can occur once knowledge has been converted to explicit knowledge. In this stage, knowledge is synthesized, diffused, and packaged for dissemination. Combination involves new knowledge created from complex sets of information within or without the organization and uses multimodal means of transmittance. Information technology can be greatly leveraged at the combination stage of the process. The combination stage of conversion is targeted towards making knowledge useable. “Combination allows knowledge transfer among groups across organizations” (Nonaka, 1997).

***Internalization.*** The internalization stage is where new knowledge is activated. Internalization of new knowledge involves turning explicit knowledge into new organizational tacit knowledge. Thus, beginning the knowledge conversion process again acquiring more expanded knowledge. Internalization requires two subprocesses - action and application. Action refers to “actualizing concepts or methods about strategy, tactics, innovation, or improvement” (Nonaka & Kono, 1998, p. 45). Application refers to doing processes that trigger learning (1998). Both action and application require intentionality on the part of the knowledge worker.



### **Knowledge Work as a Discretionary Organizational Behavior**

Kelloway and Barling (2000) proposed a new definition of knowledge work. They assert that knowledge work is a derivative of physical work and the focus of the work is on knowledge use as opposed to knowledge management in its traditional sense. They further posited that the use of knowledge is a choice not simply an outcome of knowledge work. This model asserts that ability, opportunity and engagement are predictors of knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior. The model further asserts that knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior is the transformation of knowledge type with a conversion mode, i.e., transforming tacit knowledge to tacit knowledge through socialization.

Similarly Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI model, and Davenport et al. (1996) believed there are four forms of knowledge use. They are: finding existing knowledge, creating new knowledge, packaging existing knowledge and, application of new knowledge. There are also similarities in Ruggles' (1998) model of firm knowledge who purported eight characteristics of knowledge work. The work involved in knowledge creation, acquisition, conversion, and sharing is called knowledge work and those involved as innovators, sharers, receivers or benefactors are the knowledge workers. Knowledge management pioneers such as Drucker, Nonaka, Garvin and Argyris helped to establish the value of the learning organization and organizational learning. However, recent knowledge management literature focuses on task characteristics and the nuances of the learning process that impact the learning environment and learning strategy (Battistoni, Pasqualino, & Moschetta, n.d.; Moh'd Al-adaileh, Dahou, & Hacini, 2012).

Studies such as those conducted by Chung et al. (2016) substantiate the mechanisms used to capture and share knowledge within a learning organization. However, there is a need to deepen the understanding around knowledge sharing behaviors. Herein, the old adage you can lead a horse to water but you can't make him drink is apropos. Knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior addresses this gap.

The ambiguity around the definition of knowledge work in the literature lends to its complexity in practice. However, the constant throughout the definition in the literature is active participation of the employee. Similar to Nonaka and Takeuchi's theory of knowledge conversion, Kelloway and Barling (2000), purported that knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior requires intentionality from the knowledge worker to engage in the knowledge creation and learning process. They define knowledge work as a "discretionary behavior focused on the use of knowledge" containing "four forms in organizations: (a) the creation of new knowledge or innovation; (b) the application of existing knowledge to current problems; (c) the packaging or teaching for a discussion of the importance of knowledge; and (d) the acquisition of existing knowledge through research and learning" (p. 290). The theory focuses on influencing the behaviors of the knowledge holder such that they are more engaged in the knowledge work itself. Employee engagement is positively associated with psychological wellbeing (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007). Kelloway and Barling (2000) identified three predictors of knowledge work as a discretionary behavior – ability, motivation, and opportunity. Employees are more likely to engage in knowledge work of creating and converting sexual harassment practices when these three conditions

are present. The extent to which an employee is engaged in knowledge work is positively associated with psychological wellbeing (Arnold, Turner, Barling, Kelloway, & McKee, 2007). The research on which aspect of the process relates to psychological wellbeing is wanting.

### **Knowledge Work and the Knowledge Conversion Process**

Contextualizing the knowledge conversion process by embedding knowledge into sexual harassment practices is an example of knowledge work. The SECI model in application is contextualized by the content area for which knowledge is being created. The content area for this research is workplace sexual harassment practices. When contextualized and put into practice, the knowledge conversion process becomes knowledge work within the organization. Each of the four modes of knowledge conversion in the SECI model is characterized by different activities.

### **Operational Definitions for the SECI Model and Knowledge Work**

Based on Nonaka and Teckuchi's (1995) SECI model, Williams' Fitzgerald's and Drasgow's framework for workplace sexual harassment activities and the operational definition of each SECI component contextualized by the knowledge work contained in creating and converting workplace sexual harassment activities, I propose the following operational framework for the study displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

*Operational Definitions for Knowledge Work and Examples of Associated Workplace Sexual Harassment Activities*

Variable	Operational Definitions of Knowledge work	Workplace sexual harassment activities (Williams, Fitzgerald & Glasgow, 2008)
<p><b>Socialization</b> – Tacit to tacit knowledge</p> <p>Translation of what is experienced on known but not easily translated or communicated.</p>	<p>“Joint activities, or face-to face interactions over time” (Byosiere &amp; Luethge, 2008)</p> <p>“The process of acquiring knowledge is largely supported through direct interaction” (Nonaka &amp; Konno, 1998, p. 43).</p> <p>“The key to acquiring knowledge is experience” (Nonaka, 1994, p. 19).</p>	<p>Methods of information, advice, or support related to sexual harassment, including hotlines, counseling services, special offices, and contact persons</p>
<p><b>Externalization</b> – Tacit to explicit knowledge</p> <p>Translation of “what is known intrinsically into a form that can be understood by others” (Byosiere &amp; Luethge, 2008)</p>	<p>Use of metaphors, dialogues or analogies that allow other to more easily understand what may be difficult to translate (Nonaka &amp; Kono, 1998)</p> <p>The use of deductive or inductive reasoning or creative inference (abduction).” (Nonaka &amp; Konno, 1998, p. 44)</p>	<p>Formal written guidelines regarding the behavior of personnel and the resources available to employees; may or may not include complaint or investigative procedures</p> <p>Formal or informal steps for filing grievances, investigating complaints, and enforcing penalties</p>
<p><b>Combination</b> – Explicit to explicit knowledge</p> <p>“Knowledge that is coded and classified for better retrieval and easier sharing in the future (Byosiere &amp; Luethge, 2008)</p>	<p>Collecting data and acquisition; disseminating data and information; editing and synthesizing data and information (Byosiere &amp; Luethge, 2008)</p> <p>Collecting externalized data from inside or outside the company and then combining such data” (Nonaka &amp; Konno, 1998, p. 45)</p> <p>Editing or processing explicit knowledge e.g., documents such as plan, reports, market data”. (Nonaka &amp; Konno, 1998, p. 45)</p> <p>Reconfiguring existing information throughout the sorting, adding, recategorizing and recontextualizing explicit knowledge (Nonaka, 1994, p. 19)</p>	<p>Efforts to investigate complaints, minimize retaliation against targets, and apply sanctions</p> <p>Efforts to communicate to employees the organization's position regarding harassment, primarily through informational channels (e.g., posters) rather than special classes Systematic efforts to teach employees about what constitutes harassment, its effects on individuals, and company policies and procedures related to it</p>
<p>Psychological affect (examples in the literature)</p>	<p>Engagement (Kelloway &amp; Barling, 2005); Feelings of happiness (Suleman et al. 2018).; Psychological strain (Arnold et al. 2007); Psychological safety (Jacobson &amp; Easton, 2015; Jing &amp; Yazdanifard, 2016); Sense of Fulfilment/gratification (Suleman et al. 2018); Anxiety (Arnold et al. 2007); Self-efficacy (Midlarsky &amp; Kahana, 2007); Self-determination (Mejer &amp; Stutzer, 2008); Altruism (Lin, 2007); Helping others (Wasko &amp; Faraj, 2005)</p>	

The associations in the literature between workplace sexual harassment practices, employee perception of workplace sanctions and psychological wellbeing indicate that the “how to” of creating and converting knowledge of workplace sexual harassment practices affects both employee perception and psychological wellbeing (Bratge, 2009; Williams, 2003). Workplace sexual harassment practices and knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior are key concepts in this study. They are discussed and operationalized below. The associations between the variables found in the literature are discussed below as well as their relevance to the research questions and hypotheses.

### **Workplace Sexual Harassment Practices**

Sexual harassment is a complex problem requiring comprehensive, multimodal solutions. Policies are only a start to sexual harassment prevention and should be augmented with other activities such as training, cultural support, and employee engagement (Dougherty, 2017). Sexual harassment prevention is employed in many forms also called practices or schemas. Schemas are “cognitive templates that help us comprehend and respond to experiences by providing pre-organized, general purpose understandings that can be adapted to the specifics of the current situation (Jacobson & Eaton, 2017, p. 39). There are five types of workplace sexual harassment activities – policy statements, procedures, implementation practices, education and provision of resources (William, Fitzgerald & Drasgow, 1999). William, Fitzgerald and Drasgow (1999) who posited that the five types of workplace sexual harassment activities fall into three categories, policies, procedures and practices, created a taxonomy of organizational

sexual harassment practices which encompasses a litany of workplace sexual harassment schemas. Table 2 displays Williams' et al. (1999) taxonomy.

Table 2

*Framework for and Definitions of Organizational Practices Related to Sexual Harassment*

Type of workplace sexual harassment activities (sanctions)	Definition
Policies	Formal written guidelines regarding the behavior of personnel and the resources available to employees; may or may not include complaint or investigative procedures
Procedures	Formal or informal steps for filing grievances, investigating complaints, and enforcing penalties
Implementation	Formal or informal actions taken by personnel related to the prevention of harassment or the enforcement of its policies and procedures pertaining to harassment
Prevention	Efforts aimed at deterring the occurrence of harassment or negative consequences associated with it
Enforcement	Efforts to investigate complaints, minimize retaliation against targets, and apply sanctions
Education	Efforts by an organization to communicate to employees its stance or to train employees regarding sexual harassment
Publicity of information	Efforts to communicate to employees the organization's position regarding harassment, primarily through informational channels (e.g., posters) rather than special classes
Training	Systematic efforts to teach employees about what constitutes harassment, its effects on individuals, and company policies and procedures related to it
Resources	Methods of information, advice, or support related to sexual harassment, including hotlines, counseling services, special offices, and contact persons

Different activities are more effective on specific outcomes. For example, factors such as leader preferences and gender were found to determine suitable context specific use of practices (Jing & Yazdanifard, 2016). In a study conducted by Jacobson and Eaton (2018), zero tolerance policies are effective for reducing occurrences of harassment in the workplace. Jacobson and Eaton's (2015) study sought to determine whether sexual harassment policies function as schemas to affect workplace sexual harassment outcomes such as psychological wellbeing. The outcomes demonstrated that the practices perceived as more easily accessible were more commonly used (Jacobson & Eaton, 2015). Despite this finding, there is no one sexual harassment practice that accommodates any given situation and the use of multiple schemas is recommended.

### **Employee Perception of Workplace Sanctions**

Much of the research on employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions is on efficacy and psychological safety or negative psychological outcomes. For instance, studies on reporting behaviors show that perception correlates to likelihood to report indicating psychological safety. Pointing again to Jacobson & Eaton's (2015) study, employees are less likely to report incidences of sexual harassment if the employee had a negative perception of the policy. Furthermore, employees are less likely to file grievance complaints for fear of losing their jobs (Jing & Yazdanifard, 2016). Employee perception on the efficacy of the law determines whether a person constitutes an incident as sexual harassment. Strict policy is associated with positive identification of sexual harassment whereas the presence of ambiguous or absent policy is less likely to have incidents identified (Weinberg & Nielson, 2017).

As for knowledge work, the social implications of employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions heavily relate to gender, power dynamics and, leader-member exchange. For instance, workplace sexual harassment practices although written as gender neutral are not perceived that way. This implies that the way in which policies are written affects perception of the policies. This implication supports Willness' et al. (2007) assertion that there is a correlation between the way employees perceive workplace sexual harassment sanctions and what they characterize as sexual harassment. Weinberg and Nielson's (2017) study reported a 13% greater chance that the incident would be perceived as sexual harassment if the respondent is female. Furthermore, gender of the messenger of sexual harassment practices impacts perception of sexual harassment policy. Sexual harassment practices are perceived to protect women more than men, to target men and to influence the legitimacy of incidences as sexual harassment (Tinkler, Gremillion, & Arthurs, 2015). There is a push in the literature to explore and create sexual harassment practices that facilitate a healthy organizational climate for psychological wellbeing particularly in the research regarding perception (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions is an organizational antecedent of sexual harassment in the workplace (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Such organizational factors as workplace sanctions are vital to reducing the harmful effects of sexual harassment.

Other psychosocial aspects affecting perception of employee of workplace sanctions are leader-member exchange and power dynamics. The literature on these predictors are not as rich as those on gender. However, there is substantive research on



perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions and relational dynamics between different management levels. This is also true for those engaging in sexual harassment activities and those applying the rules. Nonetheless, Tinkler et al. (2015) posited that the extent to which a policy is perceived to equalize beliefs may be a function of the relationship between the participants and enforcers. Herein, Tinkler et al. (2015) proposed another purpose of workplace sexual harassment policies and that is to align values.

*The Perceptions of Organizational Sanctions Against Sexual Harassment Scale* (Dekker & Barling, 1998) was used to measure employee perception of sexual harassment sanctions. It measures how employees feel about their employers' sexual harassment practices. Sample questions include, "The organization I work for takes sexual harassment complaints seriously"; "The company that I work for has to have a sexual harassment grievance policy to make the lawyers happy, but it is pretty much a joke among the employees" (Dekker & Barling, 1998, p. 11).

### **Psychological Wellbeing**

Unlike the taxonomy attributed to knowledge types, wellbeing is a much broader subject. Psychological wellbeing is described as "a subjective and worldwide judgement that one is encountering a maximal positive and generally minimal negative emotions or feelings" (Sulman et al. 2018). Psychological wellbeing is subjective because it is a state of self-assessment, actualization, and assessment. People are happy when they believe they are. Psychological wellbeing is associated with feelings of gratification and fulfilment. It is one's ability to perform job-related tasks despite experiencing negative

feelings. At the center of the psychological wellbeing discussion are two perspectives of wellbeing – hedonism and eudemonism (Chung et al. 2016).

Hedonism is pleasure based and is motivated by avoiding pain. It is the balance between pleasant and unpleasant affect. Hedonic views focus on job related affective wellbeing. Eudemonism is rooted in empirical, concrete means that can be measured. It is also known as cognitive wellbeing or relating to life satisfaction components (Arnold et al. 2007). The literature also draws on a distinction between context-free wellbeing and context-specific wellbeing (Arnold et al. 2007). Context-free wellbeing encompasses psychosomatic symptoms such as psychological strain, and anxiety. Context specific wellbeing encompasses components of wellbeing such as employee engagement and job satisfaction (Arnold et al. 2007). This study focuses on job related positive affective wellbeing.

Sharma (2019) refers to psychological wellbeing as having positive psychological attributes as well as the absence of negative psychological symptoms. Historically, the literature on psychological wellbeing focused primarily on negative subfactors of psychological health. Researchers have begun to explore the positive attributes of psychological wellbeing. Positive psychology was made popular by Seligman (1998) who challenged existing schools of thought that focused on negative psychological factors (Sharma, 2019). Although psychological wellbeing is hinged on positive affect, it is also distinguished by the absence of negative attributes (Poormahmood, Moayedi, Alizadeh, 2017). That is not to say that employees don't experience negative feelings in the workplace. Rather, it explains the positive

psychological state of achieving wellbeing. Literature has demonstrated an association between psychological wellbeing and organizational outcomes such as employee engagement, organizational productivity and efficiency (Suleman et al. 2018). Moreover, employees expect the work environment to be healthy, safe and one that values employee contributions.

*The Job-related Affective Wellbeing Scale* (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, Kelloway, 1999) was used to measure psychological wellbeing in this study. *The Positive Affect WellBeing Scale* focuses on positive attributes of wellbeing. A sample of questions include: “have employees felt happiness, enthusiasm, lively, joyful and energetic” in the past 30 days (Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, Kelloway, 1999)

### **Intersections of Knowledge**

The way in which workplace sexual harassment practices are created and implemented affects the way people react to policies (Tinkler, Gremillion, and Arthurs, 2015). In other words, the way in which the knowledge that is embedded in those practices is created, converted and shared has impact on how the employee responds to the policy. Furthermore, the intentional and active engagement of individuals in the knowledge creation and conversion process is associated with positive affect (Drucker, 1999). The next section discusses the intersections of the key variables as they relate to the research question.

#### **Employee perception of workplace sanctions and psychological wellbeing.**

Francis and Barling’s (2000) work on organizational injustice and psychological strain demonstrated that perceived organizational injustice is positively associated with

psychological strain. The study considered three types of perceived injustice in the prediction of psychological strain namely interactional, procedural and distributive justice. Workplace sexual harassment practices are examples of procedural justice. Woodford et al. (2018) suggested workplace practices that are worker-centric and noted that supportive workplace sanctions are associated with lower levels of psychological strain because they provide direct support to the individual. Furthermore, Woodford et al. found that anti-discrimination policies had indirect negative effects on psychological distress. Psychological outcomes of knowledge management include self-determination, altruism, helping others (Wasko & Faraj, 2005; Lin, 2007; Mejer & Stutzer, 2008; Midlarsky & Kahana, 2007). Following the above theoretical inquiry, the study addresses the following research question, to what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between the four SECI subscale scores and psychological wellbeing?

**Socialization and psychological wellbeing.** Socialization is the process of tacit knowledge being converted to new tacit knowledge. As mentioned earlier, socialization requires proximity, a desire to interact with others and the freedom to share one's experiences. However, creating such a socialized learning space in the workplace is challenging for organizations because employees have often already established some form of emotional and social connection to the work environment (Hong, 2011). Team and group work are prime examples of instances where employees make social and emotional connections. Hong (2011) asserts that the "perceived emotional backing obtained from the fellow members provides a feeling of psychological safety which

increases their confidence to undertake bold changes and try out new options as mandated in the process of constructive engagement” (p. 204). Chung et al. (2016) asserted that the psychological insecurity that comes from knowledge sharing stems from the notion that knowledge provides competitive edge for the company as well as the individual. Thus, the psychological outcomes of knowledge sharing behaviors have been the focus of much of the research on the relationship between knowledge management and psychological wellbeing. However, the recent literature has steered its focus on the positive psychological outcomes of the relationship between knowledge conversion and psychological wellbeing. Jing and Yazdanifard’s (2016) work also established that socialization among leaders and employees reduces the effect on administrative support, insufficient workplace resources on sexual harassment, and better management of the workplace sexual harassment. Additionally, psychological wellbeing has been positively associated with sociability between employees and customers or colleagues. In a study conducted on knowledge management in event planning, volunteers perceived that feedback would be better captured through social gatherings as more effective than printed feedback forms or surveys (Muskat & Deery, 2017). However, Nonaka and Takeuchi (1994) stressed that willingness and intentionality to share is required from the knowledge worker. Based on the theoretical underpinning that knowledge work is a discretionary organizational behavior, that socialization is intentional and not passive; and the afore mentioned body of literature on employee perception of workplace sanctions, socialization and psychological wellbeing, I propose the following:

H1: Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will fully mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization.

**Externalization and psychological wellbeing.** Externalization is the conversion process of tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge. It is not always new knowledge but sometime may involve translating tacit knowledge captured from one's experience (Easa & Fincham, 2012). This is the stage where knowledge is crystalized and becomes concrete information. It is at this stage that perception may have its greatest impact because knowledge is easier to package and share at this point. Externalization involves the drafting of formal documents, policies and procedures. Such development can be an emotionally taxing process (Kleiner & Roth, 1998; Quinn, Anderson, & Finkelstein, 1998). Another psychological effect of the externalization stage is being user centric. Policies should include emotionally laden language since the content included in sexual harassment practices can be triggering for those who have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment or sexual trauma (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Due to employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions, practices that involve the knowledge worker in the knowledge conversion process have greater impact on psychological outcomes than when employees are not engaged (Kelloway & Barling, 2000). Externalization also requires group commitment (Nonaka & Kono, 1998) Based on the above theoretical underpinnings that knowledge work is a discretionary organizational behavior, that externalization requires engagement of the individual and

the body of literature on employee perception, externalization and psychological wellbeing found in the literature, I propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will partially mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and internalization.

**Combination and psychological wellbeing.** Combination is the process where explicit knowledge is converted to more “systematic sets” of explicit knowledge (Easa & Fincham, 2012). Explicit knowledge at this stage is packaged and disseminated. Knowledge workers at this stage are either sharing or receiving the knowledge. The use of technology is a major component that facilitates the knowledge conversion process. It involves sharing information via presentations, legal or executive briefs, press releases and formal communications of legal documents to employees via the intranet or other forms of internal IT platforms. Knowledge at this stage is also converted through action upon the policies and procedures drafted in the externalization stage. Herein, employee perception is key. Employee perception of workplace sanctions such as complaints not being taken seriously and those targeted at preventing sexual harassment incidences are directly related to negative psychological consequences (Willness, Steel, & Lee, 2007; Williams et al. 1999). Additionally, the policy’s effectiveness is hinged on employee perception of their efficacy to be enforced. Based on the above literature and theoretical underpinning that knowledge work is a discretionary organizational behavior, that combination requires participation from the knowledge worker and the body of literature

on perception, combination and psychological wellbeing, I propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, socialization, and internalization.

**Internalization and psychological wellbeing.** Internalization is the process of converting explicit knowledge back into tacit knowledge that is embedded into the organizational culture thereby impacting organizational behaviors. Internalization emphasizes learning by doing such as training programs (Easa & Fincham, 2012). Tinkler, Gremillion, and Arthurs (2015) posited that anti-harassment practices such as training can spark perceptions that question the efficacy of sexual harassment policy and its effect on organizational and individual outcomes. The knowledge work involved in embedding knowledge into the organizational culture and consistently sharing that knowledge increases awareness of sexual harassment (Jing & Yazdanifard, 2016). The use of manuals, and procedures is encouraged at this stage. The use of manuals, job aides, posters, infographics have been associated with improved self-confidence, job performance and job satisfaction (Dougherty, 2017; Jacobson & Eaton, 2017). This stage requires additional intentionality from the organization as it expects the organization to act on the newly created knowledge. This takes place by offering training, responding to grievances and complaints, evaluating sexual harassment activities, reassessing and reengaging in the knowledge creation process again with the newly acquired knowledge.



The aforementioned information on the psychological impact of grievances procedures, using employee centric language also applies here. Based on the theoretical underpinning that knowledge work is a discretionary organizational behavior, that internalization requires intentionality from the organization and the individual which may further involve perception, and the body of literature presented on employee perception, internalization and psychological wellbeing, I propose the following hypothesis:

H4: Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will partially mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and socialization.

*The Knowledge Conversion Process Construct* (Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal, 2001) was used to measure knowledge work. It measures each of the four modes of the SECI model with four distinct subscales.

### **Summary and Conclusions**

Managing workplace sexual harassment practices has gained increased attention amidst recent social and political reforms. Workplace sexual harassment practices are in place to serve multiple purposes. Little is known about the intricacies of the prevention efforts and their relationship with psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, the subject area of knowledge management of workplace sexual harassment practices is further convoluted when employee perception of workplace sanctions is considered. The comprehensive review of relevant literature on knowledge conversion theory (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995), knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior and

workplace sexual harassment practices is previously discussed. The review discloses that there is a lack in understanding the mediating effects of employee perception on the relationship between the four modes of Nonaka and Takeuchi's SECI model and psychological wellbeing. By measuring the direct and indirect impact of each step of the knowledge conversion process when applied to workplace sexual harassment practices, this study adds to the literature, insight into how the knowledge conversion process impacts psychological wellbeing. It is important to fill this gap so that additional research can be conducted on improving the efficacy of workplace sexual harassment practices through the knowledge conversion process. In application, it adds value to the I-O practitioner by providing practical insight to the psychological aspects of knowledge management of an emotionally, politically, and socially sensitive subject matter – workplace sexual harassment. The research method that was used to examine the mediating role of employee perception of workplace sanctions is discussed in chapter 3.

## Chapter 3: Research Method

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions mediates the relationship between knowledge work with psychological well-being. This chapter provides a description of this study's model, sample, instrumentation, and data analysis plan. Regression analysis with mediation is used as the research methodology. A rationale for the selected research design and conceptual model is described. The sample size is addressed, and an explanation of the measurement tools is provided. Finally, the data collection process is discussed.

### **Research Design and Rationale**

This study employed a non-experimental, associational quantitative research design to explore the associations between knowledge creation and psychological well-being and the mediating effects of perception of workplace sanctions. Moreover, the study seeks to understand the effects of each mode of the SECI model of knowledge conversion on psychological wellbeing when mediated by employee perception of workplace sanctions.

Similar to correlational studies, associational quantitative studies are useful when researching associations between multiple variables that may have intercorrelations. The associational quantitative approach is appropriate because this study considers all direct and indirect effects of the mediating variable and the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variable. Furthermore, this study examines the

effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable while controlling for the other independent variables. Park (2019) used an associational research design in a mediation regression analysis in a study that examined the mediating role of knowledge sharing and team learning on the relationship between trust, psychological safety, and virtual team effectiveness. In his study, Park (2019) assessed two primary independent variables (psychological safety and trust) on one dependent variable (virtual team effectiveness) and the role of two mediators (team learning and knowledge sharing). Similar to Park's study, this research study measures the construct knowledge conversion as having four independent variables, one mediator and one dependent variable.

This associational, nonexperimental research design with a survey method of inquiry is consistent with quantitative research because it provides the necessary methodology needed to address the research questions. A quantitative methodology was used to test the associated hypotheses in the study. Nonexperimental research designs are used for studies where “meaningful relationships exist and statistical analyses are used to predict whether the relationships are consistent with the researchers’ expectations” (Warner, 2013, p. 19). The literature review conducted and included in this paper mentions several meaningful relationships between the variables in this study. This study advances the knowledge in the discipline because it provides an epistemological perspective of knowledge work as behavior within the context of workplace sexual harassment practices.

## **Variables and Research Questions**

The SECI model's four modes of knowledge conversion are the four subscales of knowledge creation. Socialization, externalization, combination and internalization were commonly found in the literature and are the most theoretically sound according to knowledge conversion theory. Each of these variables were measured at the interval level using their own subscale of the knowledge conversion process construct (Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal, 2001). The conceptual mediation model of this study expects that each independent variable impacts the dependent variable and that the relationship between the two is either partially or fully mediated by employee perception of workplace sanctions. The mediator is employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions. This variable was also measured on a scale at the interval level using the Perception of Workplace Sanctions Scale. Based on the relational associations found in the literature, this study I expected that the mediator would either fully, partially or not mediate the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The dependent variable was psychological wellbeing. Because the conceptual model of this project tested the direct and indirect effects of the mediator, the research questions were structured such that the independent variables were controlled in the analysis. It was theoretically necessary to test each of the four SECI variables while controlling for the others because according to the theory, each phase of the knowledge conversion process occurs independent of each other and has specific outcomes.

## **Methodology**

This study used a multiple regression with mediation analysis to address four research questions and four associated hypotheses. Through the study, I sought to understand how each phase of the knowledge conversion process impacts psychological wellbeing when employee perception of workplace sanctions is a factor. In this section, I explain the population and sampling methods, operationalization and instrumentation, data analysis plan and threats to validity.

### **Population**

Study hypotheses were tested with adults employed by organizations with established workplace sexual harassment practices that are administered by an internal human resources department. This population was selected as the target population for several reasons. The prevalence of sexual harassment has been magnified since the #MeToo movement began in 2017 as a social justice movement about sexual harassment (Gibson et al., 2019). There has been increased attention on sexual harassment in the workplace (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2018) and employers are responding by reinvigorating their anti-sexual harassment practices (Daniels, 2018). While women are at the heart of the sexual harassment research and agenda, the #MeToo movement sheds light on the interactions between gender, race, and sexual orientation in the workplace and the employer's need to respond to workplace sexual harassment (Cortina, & Berdahl, 2008; Rosette et al., 2018; Zugelder, Crosgrave, Champagne, 2018). The target population was not restricted to specific research sites so that the study sample will include a wide range of participants who fit the demographics described in the

justification. I included participants currently employed by organizations with internal human resources departments because I assumed that the employer had established sexual harassment practices in place. Furthermore, the study seeks to advance the literature and industry practice in Industrial-Organizational Psychology and therefore assumes that the human resources department played a role in the development, employment and enforcement of those practices. In doing so, it is also assumed that some of the knowledge conversion components used as independent variables as operationalized in this study are applied in those practices. Therefore, the criteria for the target population were employed adults who either were aware of or have participated in their employer's sexual harassment practices within organizations with an internal human resources department.

### **Sampling and Sampling Procedures**

This study used a single stage sampling design since the study was not limited to specific study sites, but specific criteria were used to identify the population from which to select participants. Single stage sampling allows for specific elements to be sampled similar to the way people are sampled from a population. In this instance, the population size could not be determined as the number of participants who met the study criteria was vast.

Nonprobability convenience sampling procedures were used to recruit participants. The participants self-reported demographic data such as gender, race, and level of familiarity with the company's workplace sexual harassment practices. The population was then stratified so that each participant met each criterion needed for the

study. Participants who did not meet the criteria were omitted from the sample. An a priori power analysis for multiple regression, fixed model was conducted using G\*power 3.1.9.4. The input parameters entered to determine the sample size were effect size at .13, alpha level at .05, power level at .95, and number of predictors at 4. The resulting sample size was 102. Despite growing consensus that effect size be included as a mandatory reported statistic in psychological research (APA, 2010), effect size for mediation models is a widely used method whose effect size remains arguable (Preacher & Kelly, 2018). An effect size of .13 was determined from a confirmatory factor analysis completed by Nonaka et al. (1994) that tested Nonaka's (1994) dynamic theory of organizational knowledge creation. According to Preacher and Kelly (2018), effect sizes for mediation models are difficult to "adapt to existing effect size measures" (p. 95). Additionally, ...effect sizes suggested for mediation analysis should be on a meaningful metric, should be amenable to the construction of confidence intervals, and should be independent of sample size. A meaningful metric in this context is any metric where the size of the effect can be interpreted in a meaningful way vis-a-vis the constructs under study (p. 95).

The selected effect size is further justified by meeting the factors mentioned above and its theoretical alignment with Nonaka's (1994) knowledge conversion theory and Kelloway and Barling's (1998) knowledge work as organizational behavior model of knowledge management.



**Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)**

In order to participate in the study, participants must meet the following criteria:

(a) adult age 18+; (b) employed full-time by a company with an internal human resources department; and (c) have engaged in some form of the company's anti-sexual harassment practices. Participants were recruited from the general public using professional and social acquaintances. Further recruitment occurred via social media efforts such as through LinkedIn, Facebook groups and the Walden participant pool. Data were collected electronically via an electronic survey tool. Participants were screened via introductory questions to determine if they qualify for the study. These questions included information about employment status, internal human resources department, established sexual harassment practices in place and familiarity with those practices. Participants who did not meet the minimum requirements were not permitted to proceed and exited the electronic questionnaire. Those who met the requirements were included as participants.

Self-report data were collected such as gender, race, age, work department and sexual orientation. A description of the study and purpose were provided that included the data that were collected, information on the study participants, the questionnaires that were completed, potential risks, benefits, and finally any issues of privacy and confidentiality. Participants were provided informed consent at the start of the electronic questionnaire. Informed consent included voluntary participation disclosures. Participants ended the study after completing the survey.

### **Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs**

The study used three previously developed, validated survey instruments to measure each variable. The constructs measured are knowledge work (socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization), perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions, and psychological well-being. The instruments used a 5-point Likert-type response scale. The measures were designed to report the participants' perceptions.

**Knowledge work.** This study operationalized knowledge work using Nonaka's (1994) four modes of knowledge conversion and Kelloway and Barling's model of knowledge work as an organizational behavior. In doing so, each mode of the knowledge conversion process is operationalized by behaviors or practices found in the literature and further contextualized by examples from workplace sexual harassment practices found in the literature that apply to the four modes of knowledge conversion. This operationalized process was used in studies conducted by Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2001) and Anothayanon (2006).

The knowledge conversion process was measured using Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal's (2001) knowledge management processes questionnaire. This tool was appropriate for the study because it measured the variables named in the study and has been used in similar ways in the literature (Anothayanon, 2006; Becerra-Fernandez & Sabherwal, 2001). For example, in Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal's (2001) pilot study, the authors assert that the "knowledge management process is moderated by the context in which the knowledge is being used" and that "the knowledge management

process that a subunit should use depends on the nature of tasks [behaviors or practices] it performs” (p. 27). This assertion supports the current study in that it provides the justification for putting knowledge work in the workplace sexual harassment context. The current study builds upon these findings.

The Knowledge Management Processes Questionnaire has 31 items. Items were carefully selected and applied to the study. Items that have been validated by Nonaka et al. (1994) were used to operationalize the four constructs measuring knowledge work. The reliability and validity analyses performed by Berecca-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2001) resulted in the following Cronbach alphas: 0.66 for socialization, 0.85 for externalization, 0.80 for combination and 0.74 for internalization. The pilot study for this construct was conducted in 2001 by Beccera-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2001) that used a confirmatory factor analysis to test the measurement models designed for the study. I tested the dependent variable perceived knowledge satisfaction using hierarchical regression analysis. Multiple regression analysis was used in the current study as it addressed the research questions by controlling for the other independent variables.

**Perceived workplace sexual harassment sanctions.** The study operationalizes workplace sexual harassment sanctions using Williams’ et al. (1999) taxonomy for workplace anti-sexual harassment practices. These authors posited that there are five types of workplace sexual harassment activities and they fall into three categories, policies, procedures and practices. The construct workplace sexual harassment sanctions is defined using the five types of workplace sexual harassment activities and was

operationalized as activities that fall into the three categories of Williams et al. (1999) taxonomy.

The Perceptions of Organizational Sanctions Scale was used to measure workplace sexual harassment sanctions as operationalized in the study. This is a 6-item scale developed by Inez Dekker and Julian Barling (1998). The scale measures employees' perception on their employers' commitment and seriousness of its response to established sexual harassment and sexualized harassment policies. This tool is appropriate for the study because it measures workplace sanctions in the way the construct has been operationalized for the study. Additionally, it has been adopted to measure sexual harassment sanctions. Reliability and validity analyses were conducted by Dekker and Barling (1998) resulting in a Cronbach alpha of .80. Dekker and Barling's (1998) work on workplace sexual harassment investigates perception of workplace sanctions against sexual harassment as a workplace predictor variable of sexualized and gender harassment. The study was conducted on 278 male university faculty and staff. The outcomes showed that perception of workplace sanction is a predictor of sexualized and gender harassment. The tool will need to further modify for the study to align with the specific operational definitions of sanctions.

**Psychological wellbeing.** The study operationalizes psychological wellbeing using Wright's (2010) definition of psychological well-being. "Psychological well-being is a subjective and worldwide judgement that one is encountering a maximal positive and generally minimal negative emotions or feelings" (p. 7). Wright's (2010) definition is based on his study on the role that psychological well-being plays in the workplace and

on organizational outcomes. This study focuses on the positive aspects of psychological well-being as it has been the focus of more recent literature (Arnold et al., 2007). The definition provided by Wright (2010) is operationalized for this study based on its prior use in studies that demonstrated relationships between psychological well-being and other organizational predictors (Gillet et al. 2012; Suleman et al. 2018).

Psychological well-being was measured using the Positive Affective Well-being Arnold et al. (2007) used this scale in their work on transformational leadership and its mediating role on psychological well-being. This study also used mediated regression analysis to test its hypotheses. The study resulted in three models; one being a “fully mediated relationship between leadership and well-being, a partially mediated relationship and a nonmediated relationship” (Arnold et al, 2007). The Job-related Affective Wellbeing Scale was developed by Van Katwyk, Fox, Spector, Kelloway, (1999). It consists of 30 items on a 5-point Likert-type scale. The scale is designed to measure the extent to which employees have felt negative and positive affective aspects of well-being such as motivated, cheerful, enthusiastic, lively, joyful and energetic over the past 30 days. The Cronback alpha coefficient for this scale was .97. Selected items measuring positive affective aspects of psychological wellbeing was used for the purposes of this study. Items 1, 7, 9, 14, 15, 16, 17, 25, 29, and 30 are selected for this study. See appendix G for the full 30-item Job Affective Wellbeing Scale (JAWS) tool.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

This study includes four independent variables, one mediating variable, and one dependent variable. The four independent variables are: socialization, externalization,

combination, and internalization. One survey tool was created that includes questions collecting demographic data, and modified questions from the three previously published measurement tools mentioned in the instrumentation section and included in the appendices. The survey will consist of approximately 40 questions using a 5-point Likert scale. The survey was modified to clearly define each variable and aligned with the operational definitions listed in Chapters 2 and 3.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0 was used to test the research questions in this study. The mediating relationship was analyzed using “PROCESS” as developed by Hayes (2017). This will need to be downloaded and installed into SPSS. The data analysis plan will follow the following procedure: (1) validity and reliability analysis of questionnaires; (2) descriptive statistics of demographic data; (3) correlation analysis; (4) multiple regression analysis; and (5) testing mediation using bootstrapping using PROCESS. Validity and reliability analyses of the survey will need to be conducted because the measurement tools were modified for this study. Descriptive statistics of demographic data were conducted to provide information on the population. This data will add to the findings and discussion of the results of the study. Correlation analysis was conducted to test the associative nature of the variables and the magnitude of correlation coefficients. Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the relationships between all variables. The test for mediation was conducted using the PROCESS. Bootstrapping is particularly important because this study tests the direct and indirect mediating effects of the mediator. According to Warner (2013), bootstrapping has become common in situations where the standard error is

unknown, or violations of assumptions exist for normal distribution shape. Revisiting Preacher and Kelly's (2011) assertion that effect size for mediation models be measured on a meaningful metric that is amenable to the construction of confidence intervals. Furthermore, "bootstrapped confidence levels (CIs) do not require that the ...statistic have a normal distribution across samples. If the CI does not include zero, the analyst concludes that there is statistically significant mediation" (Warner, 2013, p. 658).

### **Research Questions**

This research study is designed to test the intercorrelations between all independent variables (SECI) with the mediating variable (employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions) and the dependent variable (psychological well-being). Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test all the research questions providing they meet the following three assumptions: linearity, normal distribution and multicollinearity. Linearity assumption was tested using scatterplots. Multiple regression requires that error between observed values be normally distributed. This assumption was tested using a histogram and a goodness of fit test. The lack of multicollinearity assumption was tested using a correlation analysis. The nature of each research question in this study has the same goal except on different variables. Each research question examines the mediating effects of employee perception of workplace sanction on the relationship between psychological safety and one of the independent variables such as socialization while controlling for the other independent variables. The same statistical analyses were conducted on all four research questions.

**Regression relationships between independent and dependent variables.** The regression relationship between the dependent and independent variables were tested using an *F*-test which is designed to compare the fits of various linear models. The *F*-ratio will test the overall significance of the conceptualized model in this study. Additionally, the proportionate reduction of total variation in the outcome variable associated with the predictor variables between models was tested using the coefficient of multiple determination ( $R^2$ ). The significance of the regression coefficient for each of the four independent variables was examined.

**Mediating relationships.** The mediator variable is used to depict the relationship between the predictors and outcome variables (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Many scholars believe that Baron and Kenny's mediation model and the Sobel test are becoming obsolete and bootstrapping using adaptive statistical analysis packages are being used with increasing popularity (Bollen & Stein, 1990; Park, 2019; Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Effect size and confidence intervals was of particular importance in the analysis and interpretation of the results in this study. This is due to the nature of the variables (e.g. the controlled predictors being measured on subscales of an overall construct), the hypotheses being tested (e.g. mediating effects), and the statistics being reported (explanation of variance for each predictor).

Research Question 1 (RQ1): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization?



The purpose of this research question is to examine whether a mediating relationship exists among socialization, perception of workplace sanctions, and psychological well-being. The conceptualized model proposed in this study examines the relationships between the independent and dependent variables and the direct and indirect effects of the mediating variable on that relationship. This research question is designed to examine the regression relationships between socialization and psychological well-being and the mediating effects of employee perception of workplace sanctions on that relationship. The null hypothesis is: perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization. The alpha level for this study is .05 and a model was considered significant at that level or better. The null hypothesis was rejected where the regression coefficients equal zero. The alternative hypothesis is: perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will fully mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization. This hypothesis is based on the relationships that currently exist in the literature between socialization and psychological well-being (Chung et al. 2016; Hong, 2011; Jing & Yandaniford, 2016; Muskat & Deery, 2017) and the operational definitions of socialization, knowledge work of workplace sexual harassment practices, and psychological well-being. This hypothesis asserts that the way in which an employee perceived workplace sexual harassment practices will fully mediate the knowledge work

involved in the socialization of the knowledge of those practices and psychological well-being.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and internalization?

The purpose of this research question is to examine whether a mediating relationship exists among externalization, perception of workplace sanctions, and psychological well-being. The conceptualized model proposed in this study examines the relationships between the independent and dependent variables and the direct and indirect effects of the mediating variable on that relationship. This research question is designed to examine the regression relationships between socialization and psychological well-being and the mediating effects of employee perception of workplace sanctions on that relationship. The null hypothesis is perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and internalization. The alpha level for this study is .05 and a model was considered significant at that level or better. The null hypothesis was rejected where the regression coefficients equal zero. The alternative hypothesis is: perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will partially mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and

internalization. This hypothesis is based on the relationships that currently exist in the literature between externalization and psychological well-being (Easa & Fincham, 2012; Kleiner & Rothy, 1998; Kelloway & Barling, 2000; Quinn, Anderson & Finkestein, 1998; Willness, Steal & Less, 2007). and the operational definitions of externalization, knowledge work of workplace sexual harassment practices, and psychological well-being. This hypothesis asserts that the way in which an employee perceived workplace sexual harassment practices will partially mediate the knowledge work involved in the externalization of the knowledge of those practices and psychological well-being.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, socialization, and internalization?

The purpose of this research question is to examine whether a mediating relationship exists among combination, perception of workplace sanctions, and psychological well-being. The conceptualized model proposed in this study examines the relationships between the independent and dependent variables and the direct and indirect effects of the mediating variable on that relationship. This research question is designed to examine the regression relationships between combination and psychological well-being and the mediating effects of employee perception of workplace sanctions on that relationship. The null hypothesis is perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of

socialization, externalization, and internalization. The alpha level for this study is .05 and a model was considered significant at that level or better. The null hypothesis was rejected where the regression coefficients equal zero. The alternative hypothesis is perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will fully mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, externalization, and internalization. This hypothesis is based on the relationships that currently exist in the literature between combination and psychological well-being (Easa & Fincham, 2012; Jing & Yazdaniford, 2016; Willness, Steal & Less, 2007). and the operational definitions of combination, knowledge work of workplace sexual harassment practices, and psychological well-being. This hypothesis asserts that the way in which an employee perceived workplace sexual harassment practices will fully mediate the knowledge work involved in the combination of the knowledge of those practices and psychological well-being

Research Question 4 (RQ4): To what extent does perception of workplace sanctions mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and socialization?

The purpose of this research question is to examine whether a mediating relationship exists among internalization, perception of workplace sanctions, and psychological well-being. The conceptualized model proposed in this study examines the relationships between the independent and dependent variables and the direct and indirect

effects of the mediating variable on that relationship. This research question is designed to examine the regression relationships between internalization and psychological well-being and the mediating effects of employee perception of workplace sanctions on that relationship. The null hypothesis is: perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and externalization. The alpha level for this study is .05 and a model was considered significant at that level or better. The null hypothesis was rejected where the regression coefficients equal zero. The alternative hypothesis is perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will partially mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and externalization. This hypothesis is based on the relationships that currently exist in the literature between internalization and psychological well-being (Dougherty, 2017; Easa & Fincham, 2012; Jacobson & Eaton, 2017; Tinkler, Gremillion & Arthurs, 2005) and the operational definitions of internalization, knowledge work of workplace sexual harassment practices, and psychological well-being. This hypothesis asserts that the way in which an employee perceived workplace sexual harassment practices will partially mediate the knowledge work involved in the of internalization of the knowledge of those practices and psychological well-being.

## **Threats to Validity**

### **External Validity**

This study uses self-selection sampling a type of non-probability sampling. This is creating a threat to external validity through potential selection bias. According to DeVellis (2012), a primary goal of quantitative research designs is to make generalizations from a sample being studied to a population. Non-probability sampling strategy was selected for this study because it was difficult to define a definitive population for the study. However, in quantitative studies, non-probability sampling is viewed as inferior to random sampling (DeVellis, 2012). Despite it being an unfavorable choice for quantitative studies, self-selection sampling has a practical use in this study but not without threats to external validity.

Selection bias occurs when the sample being studied does not represent the population it is intended to represent. Conversely, it is expected that the results from the study can be generalized to the population represented by the study sample. In this study, selection bias poses a threat in several ways. The participants may have varying levels of familiarity with their employer's sexual harassment practices. Those with less familiarity may not have experienced each of the four modes of knowledge conversion. Additionally, the employers of the participants may have varying levels of sexual harassment practices in place. For instance, a smaller company may only have grievance policies in place and disclosures about the policies and procedures but not training or other forms of knowledge work practices. Similar to participant familiarity, variety of established sexual harassment practices will affect the sample and results of the study.

Selection bias will affect the sample size because not everyone will qualify for the study despite the self-selection vetting process. To mitigate the risk of having too few qualifying participants for the sample, the target recruitment number was larger than the sample size needed. Recruitment will continue until an ample sample size of qualifying participants has been attained. Sampling bias will also affect the results in the aforementioned examples of variability of sexual harassment practices. The goal of the study is to determine the effects of perception on the relationship of each mode of knowledge conversion and psychological wellbeing. If participants are not as familiar with one mode of knowledge conversion as others, then the results for that subscale for that participant were skewed in comparison to the other subscales. Therefore, the data for that subscale would be insufficient to determine if a relationship or impact exists. To mitigate this, the self-selection criteria for familiarity with employer's sexual harassment practices is designed to ask about level of familiarity with each mode using examples from the operational definitions for each variable. A criterion was set that the participant will have to have experience with a specific number of each example provided. This would establish a minimum threshold of uniformity. A similar criterion was established to mitigate threats caused by selection bias in the variability of established sexual harassment practices. The employer must have an internal legal and human resources department with annual sexual harassment compliance efforts. Such characteristics increase accessibility to, use of, and compliance with information regarding sexual harassment practices (Buckner, Hindman, Huelsman, & Bergman, 2014). Subsequently

expecting that this too will impact sample size, the same mitigating strategy of increasing the target number of participants was employed.

### **Internal Validity**

Threats to internal validity has been initially addressed by deleting confounding variables and were further addressed by conducting descriptive statistical analyses on demographic data instead of including demographic variables into the regression analysis. Additionally, the construct knowledge conversion has four subscales. This poses a threat to internal validity in that each mode of the conversion process must be measured individually or not doing so changes the results. Therefore, each of the other three independent variables will need to be controlled for while one is being tested.

Another threat to internal validity is instrumentation. The measurement error needs to be controlled in order to ensure validity and reliability of this study. Each of the measurement tools being used in the study will need to be modified from their original version that were previously published and validated. The authors developed the instruments based on their study's theories and data. The reliability and validity statistics for each of the measurement tools provided earlier in the chapter demonstrate statistical significance confirming the theories included in their studies. A similar process will take place for this study. Each item selected from the original questionnaire will need to be assessed for reliability and validity after the data is collected. The reliability and validity results for each item are presented in descriptive format in chapter 4.

Secondly, the instructions provided in the instrumentation will need to be neutral, clear and concise. This may be challenging due to the complexity of the conceptual



model of the study and operational definitions. For instance, the instructions will need to define socialization and provide examples of sexual harassment practices that include forms of socialization. This association may not naturally resonate with some participants and may pose some confusion. To address this threat, commonly used practices were used as examples and the chart in Table 1 with the operational definitions and associated examples of knowledge work were simplified and provided as an accompaniment to the questionnaire.

### **Construct Validity**

Similar to addressing threats to internal validity, construct validity for this study will undergo a process of tests of validity to ensure content validity, convergent and divergent validity, and criterion validity which help in assessing construct validity (Messick, 1980). Defining the constructs in this study was critical in addressing threats to construct validity. For instance, knowledge work, knowledge creation and knowledge conversion have been used interchangeably in the literature (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). However, for this study, Nonaka's seminal work on knowledge conversion and its definition as used in his work establishing knowledge conversion theory was used. Additionally, it is the same definition used in the study that developed the measurement tool being used to measure the construct knowledge conversion. Following such a concrete path for defining this construct was necessary because of the variations of use in the literature. Additionally, knowledge conversion had not been previously contextualized for sexual harassment in the workplace in the literature. Therefore, definitions of knowledge work as it pertains to sexual harassment practices will come

directly from the literature. Finally, to address construct validity of knowledge conversion, the construct is used as independent variables as they are commonly used in the literature (Berecca-Fernandez and Sabherwal, 2001).

Psychological well-being will also need to be carefully defined. As stated in chapter 2, the literature has moved in a direction that now focuses on positive affect as opposed to negative aspects of psychological well-being (Arnold et al., 2007; Drucker, 1999). According to DeVellis (2012), construct validity can be threatened when the various levels of a construct has not been definitive identified. For example, a study's construct may be high school mathematics. However, you may be measuring algebra or geometry. Psychological well-being in this study comprises an umbrella of positive affective behaviors. The items in the questionnaire inquire about specific emotional states or behaviors. For instance, one question on the survey is, "In the past six months, how often have you felt happy?" This question may be measuring happiness as a level of psychological well-being. To address this threat, the entire survey was used so as to not isolate any one behavior or aspect of psychological well-being. Additionally, this tool will not be modified from its original version. It was used as published. The instructions will provide context that align with the variables of the study so that the participants will focus on the intent of the construct as opposed to the outcome of the study. This means that the instructions were neutral and not "lead" the participants towards biased answers that will affect the results. Additionally, the Job-related Affective Wellbeing Scale was selected because it is narrow in focus. This helps to set clear contextual boundaries for the construct of psychological well-being as well as minimizing the content of the

questionnaire. This addresses the threat of the construct being so broad that it is unclear what is actually being measured.

### **Ethical Procedures**

Participants were recruited from the general public using social media, existing contacts, and Walden University's Participant Pool. Additionally, a webpage will be created for the study that will provide an opportunity for people to participate in the study. A statement of the study and its purpose were provided in the consent statement. Consent was collected via electronic inquiry as part of the participant vetting process with the other criteria for the study. The research procedures will ensure privacy during data collection. The electronic survey will not require any identifiers such as name, address or place of employment, and was submitted securely. The data were stored securely using password protected files on an external drive that is designated exclusively for this study. Since the data is electronic and will not be stored on cloud storage, the data can be erased using a file cleanse and restored drive. Drives that are cleaned and restored to factory settings no longer have previously saved information. These measures will ensure anonymity and confidentiality. The study will not use a study site. Since the participants were recruited from the general public and no identifiers were collected, there is no plan to share the results of the data with participants. However, the outcomes of the study will be posted on the study's website. The results will be available via published media.

While sexual harassment may appear to be the topic of the study and may be perceived as a sensitive topic, the study is about sexual harassment practices. Therefore,

the language used in the study focused on knowledge contained in the development, socialization and employment of those practices as opposed to the nature of sexual harassment itself. The study will not use content that relates to the idiosyncrasies of sexual harassment as an occurrence in the workplace but rather the preventive practices the employer uses within the company. This minimized any psychological, emotional, occupational, relational or professional distress. The data collection process was supervised by the committee chair and second chair who serves as my methodologist. Guidance from each committee member was sought at each phase of the collection process. Additional qualifications required of the student researcher were required by the research committee as deemed necessary.

Informed consent was provided in the description of the study and captured via electronic attestation. Participants will have the opportunity to anonymously visit the study's webpage to get answers to FAQs and to ask additional questions and return to the site to get responses to those questions. This poses a threat to recruitment in that some interested participants may not return to the webpage to complete the survey or find the answers to their responses. However, recruitment will continue until the adequate sample size has been obtained.

### **Summary**

This chapter detailed the methodology, analytic plan, threats to validity and ethical considerations. The goal of the study is to examine the causal relationships between knowledge work involved in sexual harassment practices, employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions and psychological well-being. The study has

four independent variables under the construct knowledge conversion – socialization, externalization, combination and internalization. The mediating variable is perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions and the outcome variable is psychological safety. Multiple regression analysis using PROCESS was used to test four research questions. One survey was created from three measurement tools to collect demographic data as well as data regarding the constructs being measured.

To address threats to validity, will undergo a process of test of validity since one of the measurement tools needs to be modified. The study will provide concrete operational definitions of the variables and constructs. The operational definitions and use of the constructs and measurement tools will mirror what has been historically seen in recent literature to ensure theoretical integrity. Recruitment targets will seek to exceed the required sample size to address the participants who may be eliminated for not meeting the required criteria for the study. Only those measurement tools that need to be modified based on the theory used in the study were.

The study will recruit participants from the general public as opposed to a specific study site. Participants were provided with details of the study including its purpose, how data were collected and shared, voluntary participation, confidentiality, time commitment, and informed consent. The data were secured using password protection and discarded by deleting the data files and resetting the drive. The results of the study are discussed in chapter 4.

## Chapter 4: Results

### **Introduction**

This study examined the relationships between each SECI phase of knowledge management of workplace sexual harassment practices and psychological wellbeing and the mediating effects of employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions on the relationships. The study addressed the research question, what is the relationship of each mode of the SECI model with psychological wellbeing and the mediating effects of employee perception while controlling for each of the other SECI modes. Chapter 4 focuses on the data collection measures taken, data analysis process, and a presentation of the results of the data collected.

### **Data Collection**

Data collection occurred over the course of three weeks. Recruitment was conducted by means of emailing personal contacts and posts to social media. The response rate was 52% with a total of 211 responses and optimal sample size of 102 was achieved by Day 16 of the data collection period. Additional time was allowed post achieving the sample size in case some respondents' data could not be used after the data was scrubbed.

### **Discrepancies and Missing Data**

Of the 211 responses received, 102 responses were removed from further analysis due to incomplete data. The process of removing missing data resulted in Valid  $N = 109$ . None of the 109 valid cases had any missing data on any of the six primary composite scales, so case-specific imputation of scale mean score was not required to address minor

issues of missing item data. The final survey had 54 questions as opposed to the initial estimation of 40 questions. This was due to the eligibility questions, demographic questions and the permission to gain consent. Additionally, adjustments were made in the number of items included in the Positive Affective Wellbeing Scale (PAWS). Initially only Items 1, 7, 9, 14-17, 25, 29, and 30 were going to be used. However, after further review of the items, the following items were added because of their alignment with the literature, theoretical underpinnings of the model and their positive affective wellbeing properties: Items 6, 13, 27, and 28. Items 1 and 9 were removed because they lacked impactful linkages to the theoretical framework and the literature that supports this study.

### **Baseline Descriptive and Demographic Characteristics of the Sample**

Demographic characteristics included in the study were age, gender, and sexuality. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the demographic variables. Age of participants ranged from 23 to 69 years old with a mean of 46 and standard deviation of 9.7. The distribution was relatively normal (skewness = 0.06, kurtosis = -0.15). For gender, though participants had a transgender option, all who responded ( $N = 103$ ) reported as either male ( $n = 24$ , 23.3%) or female ( $n = 79$ , 76.7%). For sexuality, though participants had an “other/specify” option, all who responded ( $N = 102$ ) reported as either heterosexual ( $n = 96$ , 94.1%) or homosexual ( $n = 6$ , 5.9%).

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics for Age, Gender, and Sexuality*

Variable	<i>N</i>	%
Gender	103	
Male	24	23.3
Female	79	76.6
Sexuality	102	
Heterosexual	96	94.1
Homosexual	6	5.9

	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Mdn	Max	S	K
Age	102	46.0	9.7	23	46.5	69	0.06	-0.15

*Note.* *N* and % based on number of participants who responded. S = skewness, K = kurtosis.

## Results

### Results of Basic Univariate Analyses

The initial computation and screening of composite scores required some items to be reverse coded. Five of the eight perception items were reversed coded before creating the composite score so that a high score indicates ratings of organization supporting sanctions. After composite scores were computed, standardized (Z-scores) were calculated to screen for univariate outliers. There were possible outliers for perception and wellbeing. One case (ID=92) was severely discontinuous with the rest of the distribution. This case was eliminated from further analysis. Although the case with wellbeing of -3.57 is  $>3.29$  and discontinuous with the distribution, scores across the 13 items are all “1” or “2”, which is a logical valid score, so the case was retained for further analysis. The initial descriptive statistics for each composite score showed that all composites were within acceptable normal distribution with skewness ranging from -.71 to -.24 and kurtosis ranging from -.27 to .51.



The data were then screened for multivariate outliers. Following Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), a random variable (ID) was regressed on the six composite scores to screen for multivariate outliers. The maximum Mahalanobis value was 29.894, which exceeded the critical value of 22.458 at  $\alpha = .001$  for six variables (i.e.,  $df = 6$ ) and was severely discontinuous with the distribution. ID118 was identified as the multivariate outlier case and was eliminated from further analysis. The procedure was rerun with the remaining 107 cases and the maximum Mahalanobis value was 20.202, less than the critical value, indicating no other multivariate outlier cases.

### **Reliability Analysis of Composite Scale Scores**

The perception scale was analyzed for reliability. The reverse coded q0013r was negatively correlated with q0008, violating assumptions of scale additivity. Eliminating q0013r from the scale improved Cronbach's alpha from .742 to .784. The wellbeing scale had reliability of .965 with average inter-item correlation of .679, ranging from a low of .455 and high of .906. The socialization subscale had reliability of .761 with average inter-item correlation of .346, with a low of .230 and high of .484. Externalization had reliability of .732 with average inter-item correlation of .313, ranging from a low of .156 to a high of .711. Internalization had reliability of .787 with an average inter-item correlation of .387, ranging from a low of .150 to a high of .642. Combination had reliability of .785 with an average inter-item correlation of .344, ranging from a low of .207 to a high of .482. The final descriptive statistics of the six composite scale scores (see Table 4) resulted in all composites being within acceptable normal distribution with skewness ranging from -.70 to .07 and kurtosis from -.31 to .52.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics of Composite Scale Scores*

Scale	$\alpha$	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min	Mdn	Max	S	K
Perception	.78	4.00	0.62	2.29	4.14	5.00	-0.62	0.07
Wellbeing	.97	3.07	0.83	1.00	3.00	5.00	0.07	-0.31
Socialization	.76	2.78	0.73	1.00	2.83	4.67	-0.25	-0.21
Externalization	.73	2.94	0.67	1.17	3.00	4.50	-0.59	0.21
Internalization	.79	2.81	0.69	1.00	3.00	4.83	-0.49	0.44
Combination	.79	3.03	0.66	1.29	3.00	4.43	-0.70	0.52

*Note.*  $N = 107$ ,  $\alpha$  = Cronbach's alpha, S = Skewness, K = Kurtosis. Possible range for all scales was 1 to 5.

**Correlations Among Composite Scales**

Table 5 shows the two-tailed Pearson correlations among the composite scales.

Table 5

*Correlations Among Composite Scales*

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Perception		.387	.117	.096	.031	.161
2. Wellbeing	< .001		.177	.101	.074	.250
3. Socialization	.230	.068		.755	.778	.744
4. Externalization	.324	.298	< .001		.773	.786
5. Internalization	.752	.451	< .001	< .001		.813
6. Combination	.097	.009	< .001	< .001	< .001	

*Note.*  $N = 107$ . Upper diagonal contains Pearson correlation coefficient, lower diagonal contains observed  $p$ -values.

**Mediation Analysis**

Regression with mediation analysis was conducted to explore the direct and indirect effects of the predictor variables on the outcome variables while controlling for each covariate. The mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS Model 4 for mediation. However, PROCESS did not report the effect size of each predictor, so the

regression was run in SPSS and the effect size for each predictor were analyzed, reported and discussed.

**Model summary.** The mediation model summary on the outcome variable: percept is the regression of perception in the four KMP subscales. The four KMP subscales did not statistically significantly explain variance in perception (the mediator),  $F(4, 102) = 1.69, R = .25, p = .158$ . Two of the predictors, internalization and combination, approached but did not quite reach statistical significance,  $p = .060$  and  $p = .052$ , respectively. Figure 4 shows a path diagram for each of the path coefficients.

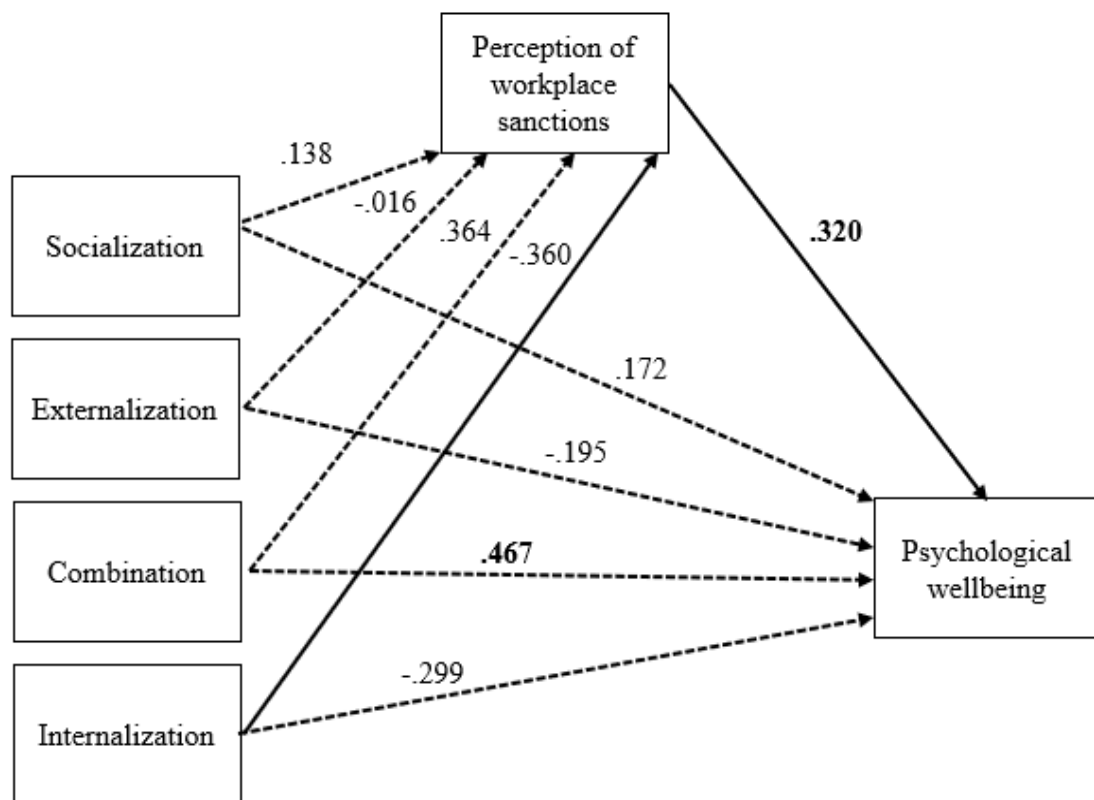


Figure 4. Mediation model standardized path coefficients. Bolded path coefficients are statistically significant. Solid lines indicate statistically significant indirect effect

The multiple regression model summary of the outcome variable wellbeing is the multiple regression of the four KMP subscales and Perception (the mediator) predicting wellbeing, which was statistically significant explaining 22.9% of the variance in wellbeing,  $F(5, 101) = 6.01$ ,  $R = .48$ ,  $p < .001$ . Perception uniquely accounted for 9.6% of the variance in wellbeing ( $p < .001$ ), and combination uniquely accounted for 5.7% of the variance in wellbeing ( $p = .008$ ). Both internalization and externalization, though not significant, had a positive simple relationship with wellbeing, but when controlling for socialization, combination, and perception, became negatively related with wellbeing; which created a suppression effect. According to Hayes (2017), a suppression effect occurs when a causal variable is related to a dependent variable through more than one separate mediator, and when one mediator is positive and the other is negative. When analyzed without perception as a mediator, the four KMP subscales statistically significantly explained 13.3% of the variance in wellbeing, with combination uniquely accounting for 9.2% and internalization uniquely accounting for 4.4%. These sum to greater than the 13.3% overall because of the suppression effects of internalization and externalization. Table 6 shows the mediation path results.

Table 6

*Mediation Path Results*

Predictor	Criterion variable							
	Perception of workplace sanctions				Psychological wellbeing			
	Coeff.	SE	p	sr <sup>2</sup>	Coeff.	SE	p	sr <sup>2</sup>
Socialization	0.117	0.142	.411	.006	0.194	0.173	.264	.010
Externalization	-0.014	0.163	.930	< .001	-0.242	0.197	.223	.011
Internalization	-0.323	0.169	.060	.033	-0.356	0.209	.091	.022
Combination	0.341	0.173	.052	.036	0.583	0.214	.008	.057
Perception					0.426	0.120	< .001	.096
Constant	3.594	0.289	< .001		0.769	0.556	.170	
	$R^2 = .062$				$R^2 = .229$			
	$F(4, 102) = 1.69, p = .158$				$F(5, 101) = 6.01, p < .001$			

*Note.* Coeff = unstandardized coefficient, SE = standard error, sr<sup>2</sup> = squared semipartial correlation.

**Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects of the Model**

**Perceptions regressed on KMP subscales.** The four KMP composite subscales did not statistically significantly account for variance in perceptions of workplace sanctions,  $F(4, 102) = 1.69, R^2 = .062, p = .158$ . The combination subscale approached significance ( $p = .052$ ), accounting for 3.6% of the variance in perceptions. The internalization subscale also approached significance ( $p = .060$ ), accounting for 3.3% of the variance in perceptions. Internalization, though in a simple correlation has a positive relationship with perceptions, when controlling for the other three KMP subscales, it changes to a negative relationship with perceptions, revealing a suppression effect in the model. Overall, as socialization and combination scores increased and externalization and internalization scores decreased, perception of workplace sanctions increased.

**Wellbeing regressed on KMP subscales and perceptions.** The combined effect of all five predictors statistically significantly accounted for 22.9% of the variance in psychological wellbeing,  $F(5, 101) = 6.01, p < .001$ . Perceptions of workplace sanctions was the relatively most important predictor, uniquely explaining 9.6% of psychological wellbeing variance,  $p < .001$ . Table 7 shows the total, direct, and indirect effects of knowledge management process subscales on psychological wellbeing.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_{a1}$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will fully mediate the relationship between SECI socialization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and internalization.

The socialization subscale uniquely explained 1% of psychological wellbeing variance,  $p = .264$ . The direct effect and the indirect effect, 95% CI [-.078 - .194] which contains a zero, was not statistically significant. Employee perception does not mediate the relationship between socialization and wellbeing. The null hypothesis was accepted.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_{a2}$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions will partially mediate the relationship between SECI externalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of socialization, combination, and internalization.

The externalization subscale uniquely explained 11% of psychological wellbeing,  $p = .223$ . The interpretation follows the same as noted for socialization. However, due to the suppression effect, a partially mediated relationship exists. Mediation did not occur. The null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 7

*Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects of Knowledge Management Process Subscales on Psychological Wellbeing*

Antecedent	Psychological wellbeing			
	Effect	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
<b>Socialization</b>				
Total	0.244	0.182	1.343	.182
Direct	0.194	0.173	1.124	.264
			95% Bootstrap CI	
			Lower	Upper
Indirect	0.050	0.068	-0.078	0.194
<b>Externalization</b>				
Total	-0.248	0.208	-1.191	.237
Direct	-0.242	0.197	-1.226	.223
			95% Bootstrap CI	
			Lower	Lower
Indirect	-0.006	0.078	-0.173	0.142
<b>Internalization</b>				
Total	-0.493	0.217	-2.279	.025
Direct	-0.356	0.209	-1.705	.091
			95% Bootstrap CI	
			Lower	Lower
Indirect	-0.137	0.078	-0.308	-0.002
<b>Combination</b>				
Total	0.728	0.222	3.283	.001
Direct	0.583	0.214	2.722	.008
			95% Bootstrap CI	
			Lower	Lower
Indirect	0.145	0.090	-0.015	0.341

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_{a3}$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI combination subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, socialization, and internalization.

The combination subscale uniquely explained 5.7% of psychological wellbeing variance,  $p = .008$ . Combination's total,  $p = .001$  and direct effect,  $p = .008$  on wellbeing were statistically significant, but the indirect effect of combination on wellbeing through perception was not statistically significant, 95% CI [-.015-.341]. Mediation did not occur and the null hypothesis is accepted.

Alternate Hypothesis ( $H_{a4}$ ): Perception of anti-sexual harassment workplace sanctions does not mediate the relationship between SECI internalization subscale scores and psychological wellbeing while controlling for the SECI subscale scores of externalization, combination, and socialization.

Internalization's direct effect on wellbeing while controlling for the other three KMP subscales was statistically significant,  $t(102) = -2.28$ ,  $p = .025$ . The direct effect portion was not,  $p = .091$ , and the indirect effect was, 95% CI [-.308, -.002].

Internalization, though its simple correlation with psychological wellbeing was positive, changed to a negative relationship while controlling for the other predictors that approached significance ( $p = .091$ ) and uniquely explained 2.2% of variance in psychological wellbeing. Perception mediated 27.8% of the relationship between internalization and wellbeing. This % was calculated as the indirect effect value (-.1373)



divided by the total effect (-.4934). Partial mediation occurred and the null hypothesis was rejected.

### **Suppression Effects**

Additional analyses were conducted to further assess the suppression effect. Table 7 is a summary of the simple (i.e., bivariate) correlation ( $r$ ), partial correlation ( $pr$ ), and change in correlation ( $\Delta R$ ) with perception of workplace sanctions and with psychological wellbeing. In the part of the mediation model in which perception is the dependent variable, internalization changes from a simple correlation of +.031 to a partial correlation of -.185, a net change of -.216, externalization changes from +.096 to -.009 for a net change of -.105, and combination increases from a simple correlation of .161 to a partial correlation of .191 for a net change of +.030. Technically, this indicates that internalization, and externalization to a lesser extent, are correlated with the error in prediction of perception by combination. Practically, this means that some variable exists that is not correlated with combination but that is correlated with perception that was not included in the model.

With psychological wellbeing as the dependent variable there is a similar pattern in which combination increases +.011 from simple to partial correlation and both internalization and externalization dramatically decrease from positive simple correlations with wellbeing to negative partial correlations for net changes of -.241 and -.222, respectively. In this case, both internalization and externalization are suppressor variables of combination, suggesting, again, there is some variable not in the model that

is not correlated with combination but is correlated with psychological wellbeing. Table 8 displays the suppression effects of the internalization and externalization variables.

Table 8

*Suppression Effects of Internalization and Externalization*

Predictor	Criterion variable					
	Perception of workplace sanctions			Psychological wellbeing		
	<i>r</i>	<i>pr</i>	$\Delta r$	<i>r</i>	<i>pr</i>	$\Delta r$
Internalization	.031	-.185	-.216	.074	-.167	-.241
Externalization	.096	-.009	-.105	.101	-.121	-.222
Social	.117	.081	-.036	.177	.111	-.066
Combination	.161	.191	+.030	.250	.261	+.011
Perception				.387	.333	-.054

*Note.* *r* = simple correlation between a predictor and criterion, *pr* = partial correlation between a predictor and criterion, and  $\Delta r$  = the change from simple to partial correlation.

### Summary

One of the four KMP scales resulted in some mediation. Only the internalization KMP subscale's relationship with psychological wellbeing total, direct and indirect effects were all statistically significant. The model was fully mediated by perceptions of workplace sanctions 95% CI [-0.308, -0.002], with the indirect effect accounting for 27.8% of the relationship. However, it is important to keep in mind that this was principally due to a suppression effect. Such effects commonly occur when predictors are highly correlated. All four of the KMP subscales were highly correlated with each other, ranging from .744 to .813, internalization and perception were correlated at .031, and internalization and wellbeing were correlated at .074. This pattern of a predictor having high correlations with other predictors and very low correlations with the mediator and the independent variable is a classic setup for this type of suppression effect in which the

bivariate small-size positive correlation between a predictor and criterion changes to a negative moderate-size correlation while the effects of one or more of the other predictors increases from their bivariate correlation with the mediator or moderator. Speculation on what variable or variables might be uncorrelated with combination but correlated with perception of workplace sanctions and/or psychological wellbeing requires an understanding or contextually relevant theory or prior empirical findings, is discussed and recommended for future research in chapter 5.

## Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

### **Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to explore the mediating effects of the perception of sexual harassment workplace sanctions on the four KMP scales and psychological wellbeing. The KMP scales were patterned after Nonaka's SECI model of knowledge creation. This current study was conducted to test hypotheses seeking to understand the total, direct and indirect effects of each mode of the SECI model on psychological wellbeing when regressed with employee perception. The goal of the study was to provide greater insight into how knowledge management tools can be used and developed that are employee-centric and support psychological wellbeing. While the key findings resulted in three of the four null hypotheses being accepted, the outcomes do provide some directional data that could be used to meet the goal of the study. These key findings are discussed in detail later in the chapter.

### **Interpretation of the Findings**

The model summary of the mediation analysis does not statistically significantly explain variance in the outcome variable employee perception (the mediator)  $F(4, 102) = 1.69, R = .25, p = .158$  while controlling for the independent variables. The outcome is not exactly what was hypothesized based on the literature. However, partial or full mediation occurred on one of the four scales. Two of the predictors, Internalization and Combination, approached but did not quite reach statistical significance,  $p = .060$  and  $p = .052$ , respectively. This means that employee perception may have some impact on the knowledge work involved in the internalization and combination processes and

psychological wellbeing. This aligns with the theoretical framework in that it supports the notion that intentionality is required on behalf of the knowledge worker for knowledge creation to occur within these two modes. For industrial-organizational psychologists, this is useful for evaluating and developing workplace sexual harassment practices such as “editing or processing explicit knowledge e.g., documents such as plan, reports, market data” or disseminating explicit knowledge based on the “process of transferring knowledge directly by using presentations or meetings” (Nonaka & Konno, 1998, p. 45). The unique variance accounted for by internalization and combination was -3.6 and 3.6 respectively. The statistical significance of the internalization and combination modes, though not significant, fits the theory that knowledge work is an organizational discretionary behavior. While the variance may appear statistically negligible, comparatively and for the purposes of this study, the effect of these two predictors is valuable in that it provides insight into which knowledge management processes are more vested in psychological wellbeing over others from the employee perspective.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that for the psychological wellbeing outcome variable, the mediator perception and combination were statistically significant. Perception yielded the highest variance presenting as the strongest predictor psychological wellbeing. This is consistent with the theoretical underpinnings which show that combination forms of knowledge management are associated with psychological wellbeing. The literature review showed associations between knowledge management/creation and psychological wellbeing. Furthermore, the literature by Willness, Steel and Lee (2007), focused on the forms of knowledge work from each of

the SECI modes that are commonly used in the workplace and their potential impact on psychological wellbeing. From a theoretical perspective, the results demonstrate that the knowledge work involved in the combination of workplace sexual harassment practices and employee perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions impact positive affective wellbeing. This finding also fits the theoretical framework that knowledge work is an organizational discretionary behavior. The data for combination were also consistent with the literature in that it uniquely accounted for 5.7% of the variance in wellbeing ( $p = .008$ ).

Interestingly, socialization was hypothesized to fully mediate the relationship between perception and psychological wellbeing. This hypothesis was based on the frequency of the forms of workplace sexual harassment practices currently used in the literature. However, it had the least effect and the smallest variance. One observation to note here is that frequency of use and familiarity with a process does not translate into comfortability, user-centricity or supportive of wellbeing. According to Singh, and Sharma (2018), comfortability and user-centricity are predictors of employee perception of workplace sanctions. This was a surprising finding that challenged the theoretical background in that the knowledge work involved in socializing workplace sexual harassment practices requires a greater extent of intentional organizational behaviors across all forms of socialization when compared to the other SECI modes. Even more interesting is that both internalization and externalization, though not significant, had a positive simple relationship with wellbeing, but when controlling for socialization, combination, and perception, became negatively related with wellbeing. This highly

correlated relationship may have value if the SECI model is administered as a comprehensive method of knowledge management consisting of a simultaneous combination of all four modes being used. This finding fits the theoretical framework since according to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995); the SECI modes are highly correlated and are designed to work spirally in sync with each other as opposed to siloed. Alternately, the knowledge of the negative relationship with psychological wellbeing when controlled for socialization, combination, and perception supports the theoretical foundation that internalization and externalization methods of workplace sexual harassment practices may be associated with negative affective psychological characteristics. These two modes may not be beneficial to psychological wellbeing when used in isolation but may encourage positive affective wellbeing when used with the other predictors including employee perception.

The total effect model of the outcome variable wellbeing which is the four KMP scales predicting wellbeing without perception as a mediator was statistically significant explaining 13.3% of the variance in wellbeing, with combination uniquely accounting for 9.2% and internalization uniquely accounting for 4.4%. This is consistent with the assertions in literature that support internalization and combination as predictors of psychological wellbeing. (Dougherty, 2017; Jacobson & Eaton, 2017; Willness, Steel & Lee, 2007).

The suppression effect seen by the internalization variable was unexpected according to the research conducted and the theoretical framework. A high correlation between internalization and perception was expected and the results of the study was

expected to confirm that employee perception plays a significant role in the knowledge management/creation process of internalization and positive affective psychological wellbeing. However, the results indicate through the suppression effect that the mediated relationship occurred between unknown variables that correlated with perception and wellbeing but not with socialization, externalization, and combination. These unknown variables explain what socialization, externalization and combination could not explain in the relationship. Internalization had the lowest Pearson correlation  $R^2 = .074$ . Consequently, what occurred with internalization is the error that was mediated by the uncorrelated variables. Though not statistically significant, employee perception plays a partial role between the relationship between the KMP modes externalization, internalization and combination and positive affective psychological wellbeing. The role that employee perception plays in the relationship between socialization and psychological wellbeing is insignificant.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The current social, political, and welfare of the economy may have played a significant role in the results of the study. There was an overwhelmingly negative response to one of the questions on the perception scale. The reliability analysis of the composite scale score of the perception of workplace sanction scale question, “the company that I work for has been known to fire employees for sexual harassment” revealed an exaggerated negative response, violating assumptions of scale additivity. Eliminating this question from the scale improved Cronbach’s alpha from .742. to .784. Consequently, for the industry, since the covariates did not statistically significantly



explain the variance in perception, the use of employee perception in the development of workplace sexual harassment practices and the knowledge work contained in managing sexual harassment knowledge would be nominal.

The study took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which people were furloughed or may have experienced some job insecurity. Although the tool asked the participants to respond to how they felt in the past 6 months, they may have been influenced by the current health crisis and the uncertainty around their jobs. The scale specifically focused on positive affective characteristics. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC; 2020), people are experiencing feelings of stress, guilt, sadness, frustration, fear, and anger due to COVID-19. Due to these circumstances, it may have been difficult for participants to focus on positive aspects of wellbeing while being amid a worldwide crisis. The socialization mode was found to be insignificant to all the modes and to have the least effect on psychological wellbeing when mediated by employee perception. This could have been severely skewed by the current health crisis that is requiring social and physical distancing.

The study was also limited by the exploratory nature in seeking data on positive affective wellbeing as opposed to negative aspects. Copious amounts of literature on negative psychological wellbeing exist. The purpose of this study was to explore the positive aspects of psychological wellbeing. This was intentional because the study sought to fill the gap in the literature on positive affective wellbeing. The study only concluded that no statistically significant relationship exists between the four modes of the SECI model and positive affective psychological wellbeing when mediated by

employee perception not psychological wellbeing in general. If the study had used the full JAWS tool, the study would have yielded a comprehensive conclusion on overall psychological wellbeing.

Lastly, as mentioned in Chapter 1, a limitation to the study was a knowledge and understanding of the types of workplace sexual harassment practices used or that are available. Some feedback from respondents was that this portion of the survey was confusing despite having examples. This means that without prior use, respondents could not connect the SECI mode to sexual harassment practices. This could be for a number of reasons, one being opportunity to use the practices.

### **Recommendations**

The knowledge work as a discretionary organizational behavior model posits that ability, motivation and opportunity are mediators of the relationship between organizational practice and the use of knowledge in the workplace (Kelloway and Barling, 2000). The variables employee ability, employee motivation and opportunity to perform as predictors of the relationship between organizational practice and the use of knowledge in the workplace of Kelloway and Barling's (2000) model may be the confounding variables causing the suppression effect in the mediation model of this study. Since the SECI composite scores were so highly correlated, one recommendation may be to analyze knowledge creation as one construct instead of four separate scales along with employee ability, employee motivation and opportunity to perform as the independent variables. Doing so may lead to a statistically significant mediation model, positive results and impactful effects between the relationships that explain the variance

and the strength of those relationships. Although originally included in the literature, these variables were excluded from the study for simplicity of design.

Based on the theoretical framework, employee engagement is also a likely culprit. Employee engagement was listed as an antecedent to knowledge work as a discretionary behavior by Kelloway and Barling (2000). Additionally, employee engagement is highly associated with psychological wellbeing (Dougherty, 2017). The industry would benefit from research on additional predictors based on the knowledge work model such as engagement and ability. Studies designed to explore these variables as predictors and mediators would be beneficial based on the gaps in literature and the existing knowledge management research.

One strong indication from the study is that all five predictors strongly predicted positive affective psychological wellbeing. This extends the knowledge of the discipline in that much of the research that exists focuses on negative affective psychological behaviors. This study demonstrated strong associations between the SECI modes, employee perception with positive affective psychological behaviors. Based on this finding, a recommendation for practice would be to consider the forms of SECI knowledge management that support desired psychological outcomes. For instance, the work conducted by Dougherty (2017) and Jacobson and Eaton (2017) posits that internalization forms of knowledge management encourage self-confidence and improve job performance. Employers seeking to address these performance outcomes through workplace sexual harassment practices may benefit from incorporating employee

feedback and internalization methods in the development and management process of workplace sexual harassment practices.

The research community would benefit from having comprehensive knowledge about the impact on psychological wellbeing if both positive and negative affective aspects of the wellbeing spectrum were tested. As previously mentioned, while the study did advance the industry knowledge on positive affective behaviors, it did not make a conclusive determination on the mediating role of employee perception on psychological wellbeing in general. This idiosyncrasy is important to underscore because of the nature of the study and research design. The study's intention for positive affective wellbeing was rooted in addressing a gap in the literature. The study confirmed the SECI modes and employee perception of workplace sanctions as predictors of positive psychological wellbeing but was not successful in identifying employee perception as a mediator in the overall model. Using the complete JAWS tool as opposed to the PAWS, may be more pointed in its delivery for a mediation model.

A final recommendation would be to consider using a partner site of a larger corporation with sophisticated form of knowledge management. If the research design follows the recommendations and includes the added variables of ability, motivation, opportunity and engagement, then using such a partner site may improve the sample population and their probability of exposure to the practices included in the KMP scales.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of the study was to explore the extent to which employee perception mediated the relationship between the four SECI modes and psychological wellbeing.

While the mediation model was not statistically significant and it can be concluded that employee perception does not mediate the relationship between the predictors and the outcome variable, it can be concluded that the efficacy of internalization is significant due to a suppression effect, the associations between externalization and combination approached mediation and the associations between socialization are negligible.

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## Appendix A: Information to Participant about the Study Survey

Dear survey participant:

I am a PhD. student at Walden University and working on my dissertation on workplace sexual harassment practices and psychological well-being. I strongly believe that employers have a responsibility to create and employ sexual harassment practices that impact the organization and its individuals. Your participation in this study would greatly enhance our understanding of the knowledge management of those practices.

The purpose of the study is to understand how the way knowledge of workplace sexual harassment practices is managed and its relationship with psychological well-being may be impacted by perception of those practices. Your honest responses to the questions in this survey is critical to the success of this project.

Please complete the questions that follow this letter of information. The information will be securely saved and stored for analysis. It will take approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey. The study commits to complete anonymity. This means that no information that you provide, or data collected will be used to identify you in any way. The collected data will be used exclusively for academic purposes.

Thank you in advance for your voluntary participation in this study.

Warmest regards,

Selena Pitt

## Appendix B: Authorizing Letter for Perception of Workplace Sexual Harassment

## Sanctions Questionnaire

**From:** Julian Barling  
**Date:** Sat, Dec 21, 2019 at 6:17 PM  
**Subject:** RE: Re:  
**To:** Selena Pitt

Selena hi there

Thanks for this email. You certainly have our permission and the original document that includes the questionnaires is attached (please forgive the quality of the document).

Good luck with your research

Take care

Julian

**From:** Selena Pitt  
**Sent:** Saturday, December 21, 2019 6:41 AM  
**To:** Julian Barling  
**Subject:** Re:

**FROM:** Selena Pitt  
**SUBJECT:** Letter for permission to use, modify and publish the "Perceptions of Organizational Sanctions Against Sexual Harassment" Scale  
Dear Dr. Barling,

Thank you for your reply and for providing the thesis tools in your prior email. However, I am seeking permission for a different measurement tool. I am writing this email to formally request permission to use your past research on knowledge work as organizational discretionary behavior in my dissertation on knowledge work, perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions and psychological well-being. I am requesting three permissions:

1. I would like to request the original questionnaire that you and your colleague Inez Dekker designed for your research study "Personal and Organizational Predictors of Workplace Sexual harassment of Women by Men" published in the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology in 1998.
2. I would like your permission to use and modify the tool you created for my study.

3. I would like to publish the tool you created for your study in my dissertation with proper attribution and citation providing you and Dr. Dekker credit for your work.

Thank you in advance for your research on sexual harassment in the workplace and assistance regarding this request. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,  
Selena Pitt

## Appendix C: Perception of Workplace Sexual Harassment Sanctions Questionnaire

Please respond using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree Somewhat
- 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree
- 4 = Agree Somewhat
- 5 = Strongly Agree

1. The organization that I work for takes sexual harassment complaints very seriously.
2. At my workplace, no one really takes sexual harassment complaints very seriously, but they have to “investigate” them anyway.
3. The company that I work for has been known to fire employees for sexual harassment.
4. The company that I work for has to have a sexual harassment grievance policy to make the lawyers happy, but it is pretty much a joke among the employees.
5. In this company, if you know who to talk to, you can get “off the hook” when a sexual harassment complaint is filed against you.
6. Where I work, no one takes this sexual harassment stuff very seriously.
7. Persons found guilty of sexual harassment in my company would probably be disciplined (e.g. by suspension and/or loss of promotional opportunities).
8. All in all, the company has really gone overboard in reacting to sexual harassment talk in the media.



## Appendix D: Permission to Use the Knowledge Management Processes Questionnaire

Dear Selena,

First, a Happy New Year!

Dr. Becerra-Fernandez forwarded me your request to use the questionnaire survey we have used in some of our knowledge management research. I am attaching one such survey. Please note that the knowledge areas in Section 3 varied across different parts of KSC, as mentioned in our papers. The various knowledge areas themselves are identified in the papers. We have directly used the data collected using this survey in the papers listed below my message. Please acknowledge Dr. Becerra-Fernandez and me and cite these 3 papers in your work.

Good luck with your dissertation – please do let us know in case of questions.

Best wishes,

Rajiv

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Rajiv Sabherwal, Ph.D.

Department Chair, Information Systems

Distinguished Professor, Edwin & Karlee Bradberry Chair in Information Systems

Sam M. Walton College of Business

Business Building 204A

University of Arkansas

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Fellow of IEEE

Fellow of the Association for Information Systems

- R. Sabherwal, I. Becerra-Fernandez, 2005. Integrating Specific Knowledge: Insights from the NASA-Kennedy Space Center, *IEEE Transactions on Engineering Management*, 52(3), 301-315.
- R. Sabherwal, I. Becerra-Fernandez, 2003. An Empirical Study of the Effects of Knowledge Management Tools at Individual, Group, and Organizational Levels, *Decision Sciences*, 34(2), 225-261.I.
- Becerra-Fernandez, R. Sabherwal, 2001. Organizational Knowledge Management: A Contingency Perspective, *Journal of MIS*, 18(1), 23-55. Reprinted in *Organizational Learning and Knowledge*, W.H. Starbuck (ed.), Edward Elgar Publishing, UK, 2008.

----- Forwarded message -----

From:

Date: Sat, Dec 21, 2019 at 6:26 AM

Subject: : Letter for permission to use, modify and publish the “Knowledge Management

Processes” Questionnaire

To:

Name: Selena Pitt

Email:

Subject: : Letter for permission to use, modify and publish the “Knowledge Management Processes” Questionnaire

Message: FROM: Selena Pitt SUBJECT: Letter for permission to use, modify and publish the “Knowledge Management Processes” Questionnaire Dear Dr. Becerra-Fernandez, I am pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology at Walden University. I am writing this email to formally request permission to use your past research in my dissertation on knowledge work and the knowledge conversion process. I am requesting three permissions: 1. I would like to request the original questionnaire that you designed for your research study “Organizational knowledge management: a contingency perspective” published in the Journal of Management Information Systems in 2001. 2. I would like your permission to use and modify the tool you created for my study. 3. I would like to publish the tool you created for your study in my dissertation with proper attribution and citation providing you and Dr. Sabherwal credit for your work. Thank you in advance for your research and assistance regarding this request. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Regards, Selena Pitt

## Appendix E: Knowledge Management Processes Questionnaire

## Knowledge Management Processes

Please indicate how frequently each of the following knowledge management processes and tools are used to manage knowledge at your job by CIRCLING the appropriate number from 1 to 5.

	Very Moderate	Very Infrequently	Frequency	Frequently
1 Case studies and stories	1	2	3	4 5
2 The use of apprentices and mentors to transfer knowledge	1	2	3	4 5
3 Brainstorming retreats or camps	1	2	3	4 5
4 Employee rotation across areas	1	2	3	4 5
5 Face-to-face meetings	1	2	3	4 5
6 Cooperative projects across directorates	1	2	3	4 5
7 Modeling based on analogies and metaphors	1	2	3	4 5
8 Simulations and game playing	1	2	3	4 5
9 Drawing inferences from trends in historical data	1	2	3	4 5
10 On-the-job training	1	2	3	4 5
11 Learning by doing	1	2	3	4 5
12 Learning by observation	1	2	3	4 5
13 Repositories of information, best practices, and lessons learned	1	2	3	4 5
14 Development of prototypes	1	2	3	4 5
15 Learning from prototypes	1	2	3	4 5
16 Learning from concept maps and expert systems	1	2	3	4 5
17 Capture and transfer of experts' knowledge	1	2	3	4 5
18 Chat groups/Web-based discussion groups	1	2	3	4 5
19 Groupware and other team collaboration tools	1	2	3	4 5
20 Web pages (Intranet and Internet)	1	2	3	4 5
21 Databases	1	2	3	4 5
22 Web-based access to data	1	2	3	4 5
23 Decision support systems	1	2	3	4 5
24 A problem-solving system based on a technology like case-based reasoning	1	2	3	4 5
25 Pointers to expertise (skills "yellow pages")	1	2	3	4 5

## Appendix F: Authorizing Letter for Job-Related Affective Wellbeing Scale

Spector, Paul  
Thu 1/16/2020 6:02 PM

- Selena Pitt

☐

Dear Selena:

You have my permission for noncommercial research/teaching use and modify of any of my scales that are in the Our Assessments section of my website [paulspector.com](http://paulspector.com), including the JAWS. You can find copies of the scales in the original English and for some scales other languages, as well as details about the scale's development and norms on the website. I allow free use for noncommercial research and teaching purposes in return for sharing of results. This includes student theses and dissertations, as well as other student research projects. Copies of the scale can be reproduced in a thesis or dissertation as long as the copyright notice is included, "Copyright Paul E. Spector, All rights reserved" with the appropriate year. Results can be shared by providing an e-copy of a published or unpublished research report (e.g., a dissertation). You also have permission to translate the scales into another language under the same conditions in addition to sharing a copy of the translation with me. Be sure to include the copyright statement, as well as credit the person who did the translation with the year.

Thank you for your interest in my scales, and good luck with your research.

Best,

Paul Spector, Distinguished Professor  
Department of Psychology

**From:** Selena Pitt

**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2020 4:00 PM

**To:** Spector, Paul

**Subject:** Permission to use the Job related Affective Wellbeing Scale (JAWS)

Dear Dr. Spector:

I am pursuing a Ph.D. in Industrial-Organizational Psychology at Walden University. I am writing this email to formally request permission to use your past research in my dissertation on psychological wellbeing in my dissertation on knowledge work, perception of workplace sexual harassment sanctions and psychological well-being. I will be building my research on the model of knowledge work as organizational behavior proposed by Dr. Kevin Kelloway and Dr. Julian Barling. I have been in touch with Dr. Kelloway who directed me to your website. I am requesting three permissions:

I would like to request the original questionnaire that you and your colleagues developed. I would like your permission to use and modify the tool you created for my study. I would like to publish the tool you created for your study in my dissertation with proper attribution and citation providing you and colleagues credit for your work.

If you are amenable to these requests, kindly provide the original tool that you created. Thank you in advance for your research and assistance regarding this request. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,  
Selena Pitt

## Appendix G: Job-Related Affective Wellbeing Scale

Copyright 1999. Paul T. Van Katwyk, Suzy Fox, Paul E. Spector, E. Kevin Kelloway  
 Below are a number of statements that describe different emotions that a job can make a person feel. Please indicate the amount to which any part of your job (e.g., the work, coworkers, supervisor, clients, pay) has made you feel that emotion in the past 30 days.

Please check <b>one</b> response for each item that best indicates how often you've experienced each emotion at work over the past 30 days.	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Quite often	Extremely often
1. My job made me feel at ease					
2. My job made me feel angry					
3. My job made me feel annoyed					
4. My job made me feel anxious					
5. My job made me feel bored					
6. My job made me feel cheerful					
7. My job made me feel calm					
8. My job made me feel confused					
9. My job made me feel content					
10. My job made me feel depressed					
11. My job made me feel disgusted					
12. My job made me feel discouraged					
13. My job made me feel elated					
14. My job made me feel energetic					
15. My job made me feel excited					
16. My job made me feel ecstatic					
17. My job made me feel enthusiastic					
18. My job made me feel frightened					
19. My job made me feel frustrated					
20. My job made me feel furious					
21. My job made me feel gloomy					
22. My job made me feel fatigued					
23. My job made me feel happy					
24. My job made me feel intimidated					
25. My job made me feel inspired					
26. My job made me feel miserable					
27. My job made me feel pleased					
28. My job made me feel proud					
29. My job made me feel satisfied					
30. My job made me feel relaxed					