

Design and Validation of a Scale for Perception of Key Factors for Workplace Harassment Prevention

Juan Carlos Armijos¹, David Alvarez-Maldonado², Nicolas Barrientos Oradini³, Carlos Aparicio Puentes⁴, Victor Manuel Yanez Jara⁵

Abstract

In an increasingly complex work environment, workplace harassment has become a critical issue, affecting both individuals and organizations. This study focuses on the validation of a perception scale for key factors in workplace harassment prevention, developed through exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, using a sample of 480 individuals, consisting of union leaders and employers. Based on a bibliometric review of the literature, the relevance of addressing this phenomenon from a health perspective is identified. The exploratory factor analysis revealed three fundamental dimensions: institutional, normative, and social aspects, which were confirmed in the subsequent stage with a good model fit. The results highlight the importance of more effective implementation of preventive policies and the need for a proactive approach in identifying workplace harassment, validating a useful tool for evaluating this phenomenon in organizational settings from the perspective of the involved actors. This research contributes to the understanding of workplace harassment, providing a foundation for future interventions and studies in this area.

Keywords: *workplace harassment, harassment prevention, occupational health, labor relations.*

Introduction

In an increasingly complex work environment, workplace harassment has emerged as one of the most concerning and persistent issues (Berdahl & Moore, 2006; Bowling & Beehr, 2006; Bowling & Michel, 2011; Brewster et al., 2012; Claybourn, 2011; Corbett et al., 2024; Enogieru et al., 2024; Epstein & Goodman, 2019; Gruber & Smith, 1995; Huo et al., 2012; Lee, 1997; Lonsway et al., 2008; Magley et al., 1999; Nielsen et al., 2017; Quick & McFadyen, 2017; Raver & Nishii, 2010; Rønning et al., 2024; Schultz, 1997; Zhang et al., 2024). Despite the existence of guidelines and legal regulations designed to combat it, workplace harassment remains a reality that affects both individuals and organizations, with profound and long-lasting consequences (Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008). The ineffectiveness of implementing these regulations has been widely documented, showing that workplace harassment cannot always be resolved internally and, in many cases, requires interventions from public institutions or interest groups dedicated to the protection of labor rights (Ho, 2024; Ziano & Polman, 2024).

Defined as a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviors that threaten, intimidate, and degrade an individual, workplace harassment manifests in forms ranging from subtle intimidation to open aggression, always with the aim of undermining the victim's professional position (Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008). This phenomenon, conceptualized as a form of psychological violence, significantly impacts employees' mental and physical health (Elbeddini et al., 2020; King et al., 2024; Marchand et al., 2005), creating a hostile work

¹ Investigador Asociado, Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Administrativas, Universidad Americana, Av. Brasilia 1100, Asunción, Paraguay; Escuela de Auditoría y Control de Gestión, Facultad de Economía y Negocios, Universidad Santo Tomás, Av. Ejército Libertador 146, Santiago, Región Metropolitana, Chile. E-mail: jarmijos@santotomas.cl ORCID: 0000-0002-0618-1987

² Magíster en Dirección Estratégica de Recursos Humanos y Comportamiento Organizacional. Antropólogo. Profesor Asistente en Universidad Tecnológica Metropolitana de Chile (UTEM). E-mail: david.alvarez@utem.cl ORCID: 0000-0002-6375-046

³ PhD in Business Administration, International PhD in Psychology. Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Interdisciplinary Center for Public Policy, Alberto Hurtado University, Chile. Email: nbarriento@uahurtado.cl; Guest Researcher at Universidad del Alba, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. Email: nicolas.barrientos@udalba.cl; Researcher at the School of Business and Administration, Miguel de Cervantes University, Chile. Email: nbarrientos@corp.umc.cl ORCID: 0009-0001-5291-6374

⁴ Magíster en Administración de Empresas (MBA), Ingeniero Comercial, Escuela de Administración y Negocios, Universidad Miguel de Cervantes, Chile. E-mail: carlos.aparicio@profe.umc.cl ORCID ID: 0000-0002-8973-8647

⁵ PhD in Business Administration, International PhD in Psychology. Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Alberto Hurtado University, Chile; nbarriento@uahurtado.cl; Researcher at the School of Business and Administration, Miguel de Cervantes University, Chile; nbarrientos@corp.umc.cl, ORCID: 0009-0001-5291-6374

environment that can lead to severe consequences such as isolation, depression, and even post-traumatic stress disorders.

The impact of workplace harassment is not limited to individual victims (Ziano & Polman, 2024); organizations also suffer its effects (Zhang et al., 2024). Productivity decreases, absenteeism increases, and turnover rises, creating an atmosphere of fear and distrust that weakens employee morale (Nielsen et al., 2017). Additionally, the relationship between harassment and power imbalance in the workplace is clear: perpetrators, often in positions of authority, use their influence to intimidate and control others, exacerbating the damage caused (Zhang et al., 2024).

This article focuses on the validation of a scale for the perception of key factors for the prevention of workplace harassment, built from an exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. Through bibliometric analysis, the scientific productivity in this field is explored, highlighting the growing importance of addressing workplace harassment as a critical occupational health issue. The findings presented not only reinforce the need for more effective implementation of existing policies but also emphasize the urgency of adopting a proactive approach in identifying and preventing this phenomenon in all its manifestations.

Theoretical Framework

In the context of growing concern about workplace harassment, evidenced by various organizations and public institutions at both national and international levels, it is observed that the effects of this issue persist, despite the existence of judicial guidelines, due to ineffective implementation (Akter et al., 2024; Anjum et al., 2018). This legal ineffectiveness is significant since workplace harassment cannot always be resolved internally, requiring legal interventions from public institutions or interest groups dedicated to protecting labor rights (Ziano & Polman, 2024; Ho, 2024), external factors such as social groups, trade unions, public institutions, or legislations. In this context, workplace harassment is defined as a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviors that threaten, intimidate, and degrade an individual in a physical and psychological environment where affected employees suffer these practices (Anjum et al., 2018; Hoel et al., 1999). This phenomenon can manifest from subtle intimidation to open aggression, with the goal of undermining the victim's professional position (Hoel et al., 1999; Konik & Cortina, 2008).

Workplace harassment is thus conceptualized as a form of psychological violence in which the victim is systematically subjected to aggressive behaviors that affect their dignity and integrity (Baillien et al., 2011; Lopez et al., 2009). These psychological abuses have negative repercussions on employees' health, such as the effects of verbal abuse, offensive behaviors, and sabotage at work (Einarsen et al., 2003; Neall & Tuckey, 2014). Unlike common labor conflicts, workplace harassment is characterized by a systematic campaign that isolates and humiliates the victim in the workplace, adopting forms such as persistent criticism, public humiliation, and exclusion from work activities, contributing to a hostile work environment. Additionally, other categories have been used to describe these phenomena, such as the concept of "mobbing" or psychological terror, which refers to hostile and unethical communication directed systematically by one or more individuals toward a particular person, pushing them into a defenseless and overwhelming position, even with the intent to force someone to leave the workplace.

Workplace harassment is a phenomenon that progressively intensifies, starting with a lack of awareness by the victim of the seriousness of the situation and evolving into a critical state of violence that leads to the victim's isolation. This process aims to wear down the victim's defense capacity. The resulting isolation causes significant psychological distress in the victim, which may include symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder, severely affecting their health (Einarsen et al., 2003), even leading to cardiovascular problems in some cases, along with depression, stress, and other disorders (Slopen & Williams, 2014). Along with the process condition of workplace harassment, there is also a cyclical condition that means a gradual increase, at different rates, which complicates the attention and perception of the phenomenon, leading to a perpetuation of the harassment dynamic through varying levels of intensity.

The consequences of workplace harassment are not limited to the victim but also affect the organization as a whole, reducing productivity and increasing absenteeism and turnover (Hoel et al., 1999). Furthermore,

harassment contributes to a climate of fear within the organization, where employees fear speaking out or taking action against the abusive behavior they experience. In many cases, the harasser occupies a position of power over the victim, making it even harder for the affected individual to seek help or report the abuse (Einarsen et al., 2003; Zhang et al., 2024). In this sense, workplace harassment is the result of a power imbalance, where the harasser uses their authority and influence to intimidate or control employees in an aggressive manner. The tactics used by harassers may vary, including spreading false rumors, isolation, and withholding important information (Salin, 2008).

In this context, the power imbalance and abuse of authority are key themes associated with workplace harassment. Another relevant theme is the variety of harassment tactics employed by aggressors, ranging from subtle forms to open aggression (Salin, 2008). Additionally, workplace harassment is characterized by escalating and repetitive behaviors that tend to intensify, progressively wearing down the victims' self-defense capacity (Mansoor et al., 2025).

Health is another fundamental aspect in the study of workplace harassment (Ganes & Sunder, 2024), as victims often face severe emotional and physical problems (Hunter, 2005). The psychological impact of harassment can be long-lasting, with symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder that persist long after the harassment has ceased.

A critical issue is the subtle nature of workplace harassment, which makes its identification and evidence difficult in the early stages. This phenomenon can develop undetected until it reaches a significant and hard-to-address severity. As a result, victims often suffer in silence for fear of retaliation or not being believed by management (Volokh, 1991), which contributes to the difficulties in observing and addressing this phenomenon.

Additionally, workplace harassment manifests as a group phenomenon, often involving a collective effort by several people to isolate an individual, with the overall work environment, alongside the harasser, participating. Silence and fear of retaliation cause victims to suffer without the phenomenon being publicly evident. In this context, victims face threats to prevent their cases from being recognized, along with subtle harassment tactics, which means they are easily dismissed by third parties and authorities as minor conflicts (Hoel et al., 1999).

One of the main consequences of workplace harassment is the transformation of the work environment into a negative atmosphere, characterized by fear and widespread distrust, ultimately affecting the overall performance of the organization. This phenomenon can lead to a collapse in communication within teams, making effective collaboration and teamwork difficult. Thus, workplace harassment not only represents a threat to the health and well-being of employees (Gómez, 2015) but also poses a risk to the climate and organizational culture. The presence of workplace harassment is often linked to poor leadership and the lack of clear policies to address abusive behaviors, which can lead to high turnover rates, absenteeism, and a general decline in employee morale (Hoel et al., 1999). Consequently, workplace harassment tends to reduce job satisfaction (Einarsen et al., 2003).

In this framework of study on workplace harassment, a bibliometric analysis was conducted using the Web of Science database, covering the period from 1985 to August 13, 2024, resulting in the identification of 338 documents. The search term "workplace harassment" was chosen instead of "workplace bullying" due to the practical differences between the two concepts. While "workplace harassment" encompasses a legal dimension and is associated with violence and discrimination in the workplace, "workplace bullying" refers to general abuse that is not necessarily regulated by law.

In this context, "workplace harassment" is defined as violent, discriminatory, and inappropriate behavior directed at an individual or group due to their characteristics, being a legally regulated conduct for prohibition in work environments. In contrast, workplace bullying (Corbett et al., 2024; Hewett et al., 2018;

Longpré & Turner, 2024), although also an offensive behavior, is not always regulated nor based on discriminations by legally protected characteristics, though it can still be equally harmful.

The results of the bibliometric analysis are presented in various tables that allow for the identification of scientific productivity in the field of workplace harassment and the involved actors. Figure 1 and Table 1 show a growing trend in scientific production on this topic, demonstrating an increasing interest in workplace harassment. Figure 2 highlights the main authors associated with research in workplace harassment, based on their co-authorships. Table 2 identifies the most productive authors in this area, highlighting Rospenda and Richman (Richman et al., 1996; Rospenda et al., 2009) as the most prolific, which is also reflected in Figure 2, where they lead collaborations among different authors.

Additionally, Figure 3 points out the country's leading scientific productivity in this field, with the United States at the forefront, being the country with the highest number of collaborations and publications on workplace harassment. This situation is confirmed in Table 3, where the United States represents 49.4% of total productivity, with 167 articles published, far surpassing other countries.

Table 4 shows that this scientific productivity is mainly associated with the "Public Environmental Occupational Health" category of Web of Science, indicating a strong link between workplace harassment and health areas. This is confirmed in Table 7, where the main university institutions leading scientific productivity in this field are University of Illinois Hospital Health Sciences System, University of Illinois Chicago College of Medicine, and University of Illinois Chicago Department of Psychiatry, highlighting the connection between this research and medicine and health in general.

Table 5 corroborates that most of the scientific production is indexed in the Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI). The main university institutions affiliated with these research activities are represented in Figure 4 and Table 6, where co-authorships are graphed, and respective productivity is detailed. The results of this theoretical bibliometric analysis are described below:

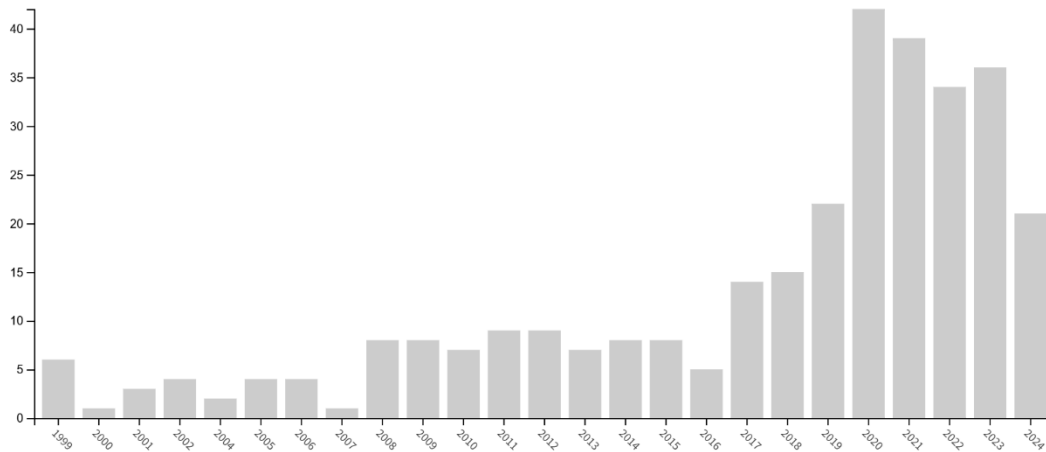


Fig 1. Scientific Productivity Over the Years on Workplace Harassment. Source: Created using Web of Science.

Table 1. Scientific Productivity Over the Years on Workplace Harassment.

Publication Years	Frequency	% of Total 338
2024	21	6.213
2023	36	10.651
2022	34	10.059
2021	39	11.538
2020	42	12.426
2019	22	6.509
2018	15	4.438
2017	14	4.142
2016	5	1.479
2015	8	2.367
2014	8	2.367
2013	7	2.071
2012	9	2.663
2011	9	2.663
2010	7	2.071
2009	8	2.367
2008	8	2.367
2007	1	0.296
2006	4	1.183
2005	4	1.183
2004	2	0.592
2002	4	1.183
2001	3	0.888
2000	1	0.296
1999	6	1.775
1998	1	0.296
1997	3	0.888
1996	4	1.183
1995	2	0.592
1992	1	0.296
1991	2	0.592
1988	1	0.296
1987	2	0.592
1986	3	0.888
1985	2	0.592

Source: Created using Web of Science.

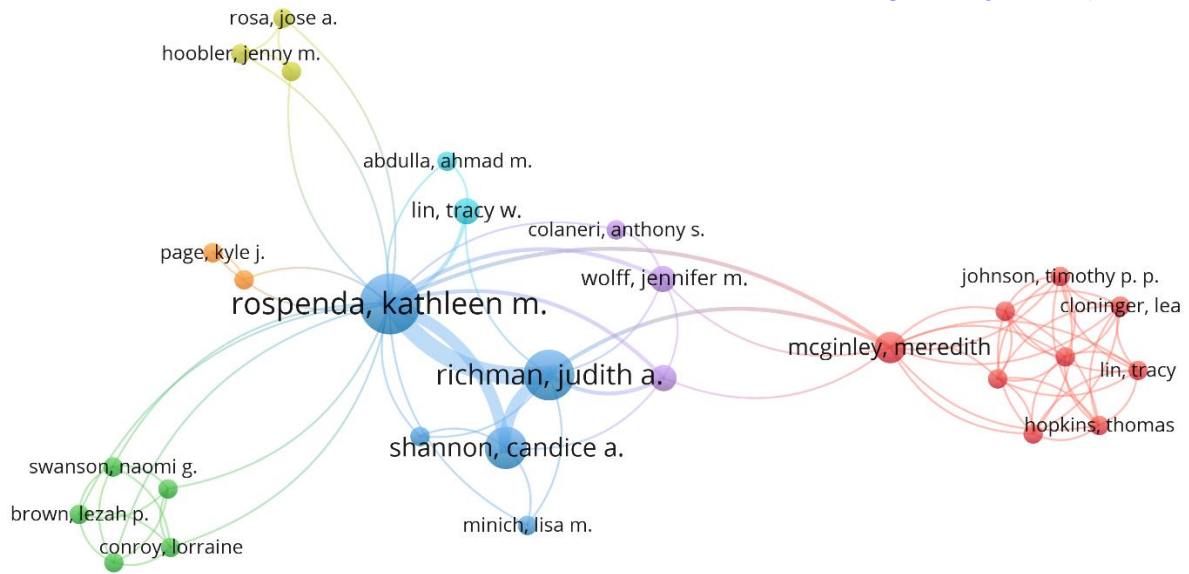


Fig 2. Co-authorship Map Between Authors of Scientific Articles.

Source: Created by the author using VOSviewer software.

Table 2. Authors of Scientific Articles Based on Productivity.

Authors	Productivity	% of Total 338
Rospenda KM	23	6.805
Richman JA	19	5.621
Shannon CA	7	2.071
Flaherty JA	5	1.479
Cortina LM	4	1.183
Freels S	4	1.183
Henning MA	4	1.183
Marchand A	4	1.183
Moir F	4	1.183
Nielsen MB	4	1.183
Webster CS	4	1.183
Bowling NA	3	0.888
Chen Y	3	0.888
Mccginley M	3	0.888
Quinlan E	3	0.888
Robertson S	3	0.888
Abarca MFA	2	0.592
Barnett J	2	0.592
Berdahl JL	2	0.592
Blackwood L	2	0.592
Blanc ME	2	0.592
Buchanan NT	2	0.592
Caban-martinez AJ	2	0.592
Carr T	2	0.592
Claybourn M	2	0.592
Coomber T	2	0.592
Díaz-garcía O	2	0.592
Einarsen S	2	0.592

Einarsen SV	2	0.592
--------------------	---	-------

Source: Created using Web of Science.

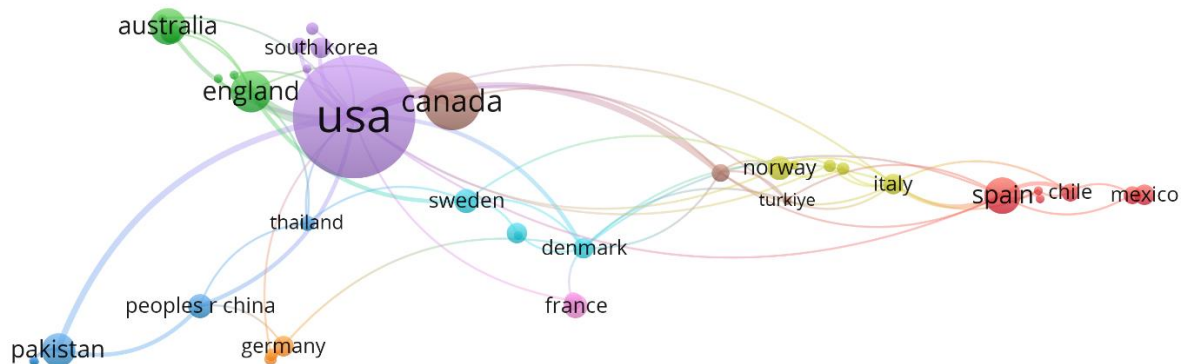


Fig 3. Co-authorship Map Between Countries in the Development of Scientific Articles.

Table 3. Productivity of Countries in Scientific Articles.

Countries	Frequency	% of Total 338
USA	167	49.408
Canada	37	10.947
England	20	5.917
Australia	15	4.438
Spain	15	4.438
Pakistan	13	3.846
France	7	2.071
Norway	7	2.071
Peoples R China	7	2.071
Sweden	7	2.071
Denmark	5	1.479
Ecuador	5	1.479
Finland	5	1.479
Germany	5	1.479
Italy	5	1.479
Mexico	5	1.479
New Zealand	5	1.479
South Korea	5	1.479
Brazil	4	1.183
Chile	4	1.183

Source: Created using Web of Science.

Table 4. Productivity of Scientific Articles by Web of Science Categories.

WOS Categories	Frequency	% of Total 338
Public Environmental Occupational Health	53	15.680
Psychology Applied	36	10.651
Management	32	9.467
Law	28	8.284

Social Sciences Interdisciplinary	23	6.805
Psychology Multidisciplinary	21	6.213
Women S Studies	19	5.621
Psychiatry	16	4.734
Substance Abuse	16	4.734
Sociology	15	4.438
Education Educational Research	13	3.846
Environmental Sciences	13	3.846
Medicine General Internal	13	3.846
Business	12	3.550
Psychology Social	12	3.550
Criminology Penology	11	3.254
Industrial Relations Labor	10	2.959
Psychology	9	2.663
Education Scientific Disciplines	8	2.367

Source: Created using Web of Science.

Table 5. Productivity of Scientific Articles by Web of Science Indexes.

WOS Index	Frequency	% of Total 338
Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)	234	69.231
Science Citation Index Expanded (SCI-EXPANDED)	106	31.361
Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)	56	16.568
Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Social Science y Humanities (CPCI-SSH)	10	2.959
Conference Proceedings Citation Index – Science (CPCI-S)	5	1.479
Arts y Humanities Citation Index (AyHCI)	3	0.888

Source: Created using Web of Science.



Fig 4. Co-authorship Map Between Universities in the Development of Scientific Articles. Source: Created by the author using VOSviewer software.

Table 6. Productivity of Scientific Articles by Universities.

Universities	Frequency	% of Total 338
University of Illinois System	27	7.988
University of Illinois Chicago	25	7.396
University of Illinois Chicago Hospital	25	7.396
Harvard University	15	4.438
State University System of Florida	12	3.550
University of Michigan	9	2.663
University of Michigan System	9	2.663
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health	8	2.367
University of California System	8	2.367

University System of Ohio	8	2.367
University of Bergen	6	1.775
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention USA	5	1.479
Florida State University	5	1.479
Université de Montréal	5	1.479
University of London	5	1.479
University of Toronto	5	1.479
Ball State University	4	1.183
Harvard Medical School	4	1.183
Michigan State University	4	1.183
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)	4	1.183
National Institute for Occupational Health	4	1.183
University of Auckland	4	1.183
University of Calgary	4	1.183
University of Copenhagen	4	1.183
University of Minnesota System	4	1.183
University of New Brunswick	4	1.183
University of Saskatchewan	4	1.183
University of Washington	4	1.183

Source: Created using Web of Science.

Table 7. Productivity of Scientific Articles by University Departments.

Affiliation with Department	Record Count	% of 338
University Of Illinois Hospital Health Sciences System	19	5.621
University Of Illinois Chicago College of Medicine	18	5.325
University Of Illinois Chicago Department of Psychiatry	18	5.325
University Of Michigan College of Literature Science and The Arts	6	1.775
University Of Michigan Department of Psychology	6	1.775
Harvard University Department of Environmental Health	5	1.479
Michigan State University College of Social Science	4	1.183
Michigan State University Department of Psychology	4	1.183
The University of Auckland Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences	4	1.183
The University of Auckland School of Population Health	4	1.183
University of Montreal Faculty of Arts and Sciences	4	1.183
University of Montreal School of Industrial Relations	4	1.183
Wright State University College of Science and Mathematics	4	1.183
Wright State University Department of Psychology	4	1.183
Harvard University Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences	3	0.888

Source: Created using Web of Science.

Methodology

This research utilized a survey developed by the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores de Chile, which surveyed employers and union leaders from both the public and private sectors about issues related to workplace harassment and violence. A total of 480 people were surveyed. Of these, 31.7% were union leaders from the public sector, 24.6% were union leaders from the private sector, 2.3% were employers from the public sector, and 41.5% were employers from the private sector, as shown in Table 8. Among the respondents,

61.9% identified as female and 38.1% identified as male, as reflected in Table 9. The survey found that 42.2% of the respondents were from the metropolitan region, while the remaining respondents were from various regions in equal amounts, as shown in Table 10. Additionally, 87.9% were from urban areas, and 11.5% were from rural areas, as observable in Table 11.

In this context, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted using the principal axis factoring extraction method to identify latent structures. A varimax rotation was applied to distinguish latent constructs among the different survey questions, resulting in the identification of relevant items associated with three main constructs: institutional aspects, normative aspects, and social aspects. A reliability analysis was also performed for each set of items generated.

Subsequently, a confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to verify the discriminant validity of the dimensions identified in the exploratory analysis. This process led to the validation of a scale of perception of key factors for the prevention of workplace harassment. The characteristics of the analyzed sample are described below:

Table 8. Union Leaders and Employers by Sector

		Frequenc y	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Public Union Leaders	152	31,7	31,7
	Private Union Leaders	118	24,6	56,3
	Public Sector Employers	11	2,3	58,5
	Private Sector Employers	199	41,5	100,0
	Total	480	100,0	

Source: Created by the author using SPSS software.

Table 9. Gender of Trade Union Actors and Employers

		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Female	297	61,9	61,9
	Male	183	38,1	100,0
	Total	480	100,0	

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 10. Gender of Trade Union Actors and Employers by Region

		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Antofagasta	11	2,3	2,3
	Araucanía	25	5,2	7,5
	Arica y Parinacota	4	,8	8,3
	Atacama	19	4,0	12,3
	Aysén	4	,8	13,1
	Biobío	23	4,8	17,9
	Coquimbo	15	3,1	21,0
	Libertador Bernardo O'Higgins	18	3,8	24,8
	Los Lagos	19	4,0	28,7
	Los Ríos	14	2,9	31,7
	Magallanes y la Antártica Chilena	5	1,0	32,7
	Maule	22	4,6	37,3

Metropolitana	203	42,3	79,6
Ñuble	10	2,1	81,7
Tarapacá	13	2,7	84,4
Valparaíso	75	15,6	100,0
Total	480	100,0	

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 11. Gender of Trade Union Actors and Employers by Urban or Rural Area

		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Rural	55	11,5	11,5
	Urbana	422	87,9	99,4
	Urbana, Rural	3	,6	100,0
	Total	480	100,0	

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Results

The results allowed for the design and validation of a scale to assess the perception of key factors in the prevention of workplace harassment. First, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted, yielding an acceptable KMO index of 0.746 and a significant Bartlett's test of sphericity (see Table 12). Additionally, the extraction communalities, presented in Table 13, exceeded a value of 0.7 for all items. The total explained variance revealed three factors associated with potential dimensions within the items, accounting for a cumulative 91.870% of the total variance (see Table 14). The factor loadings of the rotated factor matrix showed values greater than 0.8 for all items, with three clearly differentiated dimensions, as shown in Tables 15 and 16. Each of these dimensions underwent a reliability analysis, yielding a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.9 in all cases (see Tables 17, 18, and 19). Thus, the exploratory factor analysis not only confirmed the reliability of the items but also suggested the existence of three dimensions, which were subsequently confirmed in the confirmatory factor analysis. The results of these analytical processes are described below:

Tabla 12. KMO and Bartlett test

KMO and Bartlett test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy		,746
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Aprox. Chi-cuadrado	2968,550
	Gf	21
	Sig.	,000

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 13.Communities

Communities		
	Initial	Extraction
1A.	,697	,832
2A.	,688	,814
3B.	,771	,866
4B.	,772	,880
6B.	,766	,798
7B.	,856	,934

8B.	,836	,876
Extraction method: principal axis factorization.		

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 14. Total variance explained

Total variance explained									
Factor	Initial eigenvalues			Sums of squared loadings from extraction			Sums of squared loadings from rotation		
	Total	% variance	% accumulated	Total	% variance	% accumulated	Total	% variance	% accumulated
1	4,038	57,680	57,680	3,899	55,695	55,695	2,505	35,792	35,792
2	1,393	19,899	77,579	1,245	17,788	73,483	1,794	25,633	61,425
3	1,000	14,291	91,870	,856	12,226	85,709	1,700	24,284	85,709
4	,184	2,633	94,502						
5	,175	2,493	96,995						
6	,122	1,736	98,731						
7	,089	1,269	100,000						

Extraction method: principal axis factorization.

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 15. Factor Matrix

Factorial matrix^a			
	Factor		
	1	2	3
1A.	,634	-,531	
2A.	,637		
3B.	,660	,581	
4B.	,646	,623	
6B.	,839		
7B.	,882		
8B.	,870		

Extraction method: principal axis factorization.
^a3 factors extracted. 9 iterations required.

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 16. Rotated Factorial Matrix

Rotated factor matrix^a			
	Factor		
	1	2	3
1A.			,873
2A.			,865

3B.		,893
4B.		,905
6B.	,825	
7B.	,915	
8B.	,874	
Extraction method: Principal axis factorization.		
Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser normalization.		
^a The rotation has converged in 5 iterations.		

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 17. Reliability of the normative dimension

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
,902	2

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software

Table 18. Reliability of the social dimension

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
,931	2

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Table 19. Reliability of the institutional dimension

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	Number of items
,951	3

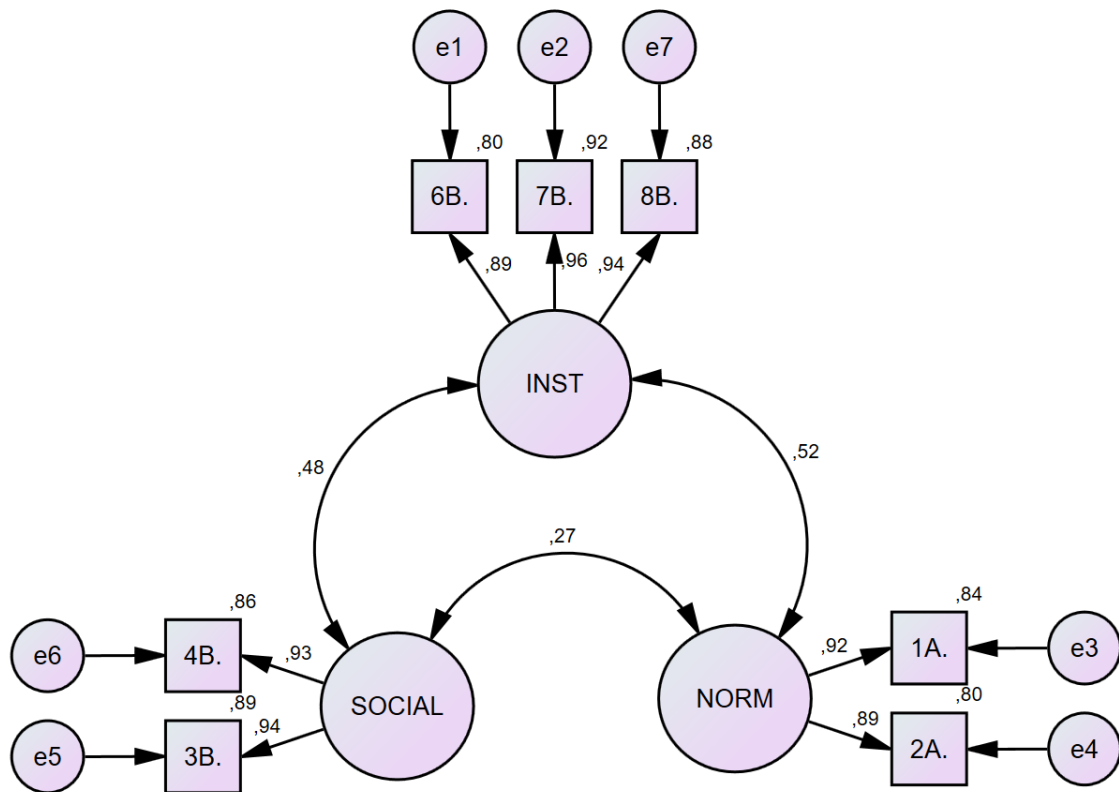
Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

The results of the confirmatory factor analysis show a good fit for the three-dimensional model, as seen in Figure 5 and Table 23. The model indicators reflect a satisfactory fit, highlighting an RMSEA of 0.7 (see Table 20). Additionally, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Incremental Fit Index (IFI) exceed the value of 0.9, as presented in Table 21.

The analysis of the correlation matrix compared to the square roots of the AVE for each dimension, reported in Tables 22 and 24, supports the discriminant validity of the dimensions, with AVE values greater than 0.8. This confirms the discriminant validity and reliability of the dimensions of the proposed scale, previously identified in the exploratory factor analysis and evaluated through Cronbach's alpha. Finally, the overall reliability of the scale for the perception of key factors in the prevention of workplace harassment, as indicated in Table 25, reflects a Cronbach's alpha greater than 0.8. The results of this analysis are presented below:

Figure 5

Model of dimensions of the scale of perception of key factors for the prevention of harassment at work.



Source: Prepared by the authors using AMOS software.

Table 20. RMSEA

Model	RMSEA	LO 90	HI 90	PCLOSE
Default model	,070	,046	,096	,083
Independence model	,543	,527	,560	,000

Source: Prepared by the authors using AMOS software

Table 21. Baseline Comparisons

Model	NFI Delta1	RFI rho1	IFI Delta2	TLI rho2	CFI
Default model	,988	,976	,991	,983	,991
Saturated model	1,000		1,000		1,000
Independence model	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000

Source: Prepared by the authors using AMOS software

Table 22. Model Correlations

			Estimate
Institucional	<-->	Normativa	,517
Social	<-->	Institucional	,484
Social	<-->	Normativa	,270

Source: Prepared by the authors using AMOS software

Table 23. Standardized Regressions by Item

The executive branch is relevant in the context of violence and harassment in the world of work	<---	INST	,894
The legislative branch is relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	<---	INST	,961
The judicial branch is relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	<---	INST	,940
The most appropriate mechanism for building policies and/or protocols on violence and harassment in the workplace is national legislation on violence and harassment	<---	NORM	,919
The most appropriate mechanism for building policies and/or protocols on violence and harassment in the workplace is government protocols and/or regulations specific to each area of work in the public sector	<---	NORM	,894
Grassroots trade union associations are relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	<---	SOCIAL	,942
Higher-level trade union organisations (federations, confederations and central organisations) are relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	<---	SOCIAL	,925

Source: Prepared by the authors using AMOS software

Table 24. Correlaciones del Modelo y AVE de dimensiones

	INST	NORM	SOCIAL
INST	0,87 (RAIZ: 0,93)	0,51	0,48
NORM	0,51	0,82 (RAIZ: 0,90)	0,27
SOCIAL	0,48	0,27	0,87 (RAIZ: 0,93)

Source: Prepared by the authors using Excel software.

Table 25. Reliability of the scale of perception of key factors for the prevention of harassment at Work

Reliability statistics	
Cronbach's alpha	Number of ítems
,871	7

Source. Prepared by the authors using SPSS software.

Conclusions

This study makes a significant contribution to the understanding of workplace harassment, a global issue that has gained increasing attention both nationally and internationally. By conducting a thorough literature review and validating a specific scale, the research identifies and confirms three critical dimensions essential for the prevention of workplace harassment: institutional, normative, and social aspects. The confirmation of these dimensions through a robust confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) provides a solid foundation for evaluating the factors that contribute to harassment prevention in various work environments.

The results emphasize the importance of effectively implementing legal guidelines and frameworks at all levels of governance, particularly in terms of ensuring that harassment prevention measures are legislated, enforced, and followed consistently. At the same time, the study stresses the need for continuous awareness-raising, education, and training in organizational settings, particularly to address harassment from its earliest signs. Effective training programs and organizational support can prevent the escalation of

workplace harassment and contribute to creating a safe and respectful working environment. The study underscores that harassment is a pervasive issue that requires active, ongoing intervention and engagement from all levels of an organization—both leadership and employees.

Moreover, the research reveals the severe impact that workplace bullying has on both individual victims and the organization as a whole. Bullying not only harms the physical and mental health of employees but also creates a toxic atmosphere that affects productivity, morale, and organizational well-being. The tactics used by bullies, which can range from subtle microaggressions to overt acts of aggression, often involve power imbalances that reinforce and perpetuate abusive behaviors. This dynamic highlights the need for effective organizational policies and supportive work environments that can identify and address harassment in a timely manner, ensuring that victims are protected and the overall workplace culture is safeguarded.

The bibliometric analysis further complements these findings by showing the growing academic interest in workplace bullying, particularly in occupational health disciplines. Countries like the United States are leading scientific production in this area, with research largely concentrated on public health and workplace safety. This reinforces the notion that workplace harassment should be treated not only as an organizational issue but also as a significant public health concern. Addressing harassment is not only essential for the mental and physical well-being of workers, but also for improving the productivity and overall effectiveness of organizations.

Finally, the validation of the perception scale developed in this study serves as a powerful tool for future research, enabling organizations to assess and address harassment proactively. By providing a reliable and valid measure of the key factors influencing the prevention of workplace harassment, this scale can be used to evaluate existing practices, identify gaps, and implement evidence-based strategies to create safer, more inclusive workplaces. Furthermore, the scale can be adapted and expanded to fit different industries, organizational contexts, and cultural environments, making it a versatile instrument for assessing workplace harassment prevention efforts on a global scale.

In light of these findings, organizations are strongly encouraged to take a proactive approach to identifying, addressing, and preventing workplace harassment. This involves not only developing and implementing effective anti-harassment policies but also fostering a culture of openness and respect where employees feel empowered to speak out against harassment. By prioritizing the well-being of employees and creating a supportive work environment, organizations can enhance their productivity, improve employee retention, and contribute to a positive organizational climate.

The findings also suggest the need for policymakers and employers to invest in targeted programs that address each of the three key dimensions identified in this study—institutional, normative, and social—while ensuring that all levels of the workforce are actively engaged in preventing harassment. By doing so, organizations can move beyond reactive responses to harassment and create environments where all employees feel respected, valued, and safe from harm.

Table 26. Scale of Perception of Key Factors for the Prevention of Harassment at Work.

Key Factors	Description
The executive branch is relevant in the context of violence and harassment in the world of work	The executive branch's role is crucial in addressing workplace harassment, ensuring that policies and procedures are implemented and enforced effectively at the organizational level.
The legislative branch is relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	The legislative branch is key to establishing and updating laws that protect employees from harassment and define appropriate legal measures for its prevention.

The judicial branch is relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	The judiciary plays an essential role in upholding the laws related to workplace harassment and ensuring that violations are prosecuted and justice is served.
The most appropriate mechanism for building policies and/or protocols on violence and harassment in the workplace is national legislation on violence and harassment	National legislation serves as the foundation for developing policies and protocols that guide employers in preventing and addressing harassment.
The most appropriate mechanism for building policies and/or protocols on violence and harassment in the workplace is government protocols and/or regulations specific to each area of work in the public sector	Government protocols tailored to specific sectors provide clear, practical guidance for preventing and responding to harassment within particular industries and organizations.
Grassroots trade union associations are relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	Grassroots trade unions are vital in mobilizing workers at the local level to advocate for better protection and prevention of harassment in their workplaces.
Higher-level trade union organizations (federations, confederations, and central organizations) are relevant in the context of eradicating violence and harassment in the world of work	Larger, federated trade unions have the power to influence national and international policies, ensuring that workplace harassment prevention efforts are scaled and effectively implemented across multiple sectors.

Source. Prepared by the authors.

In conclusion, the development and validation of the scale for the perception of key factors in the prevention of workplace harassment outlined in this study provide invaluable insights for future research and practical applications. By recognizing and addressing the institutional, normative, and social aspects that contribute to harassment prevention, organizations can take proactive steps toward ensuring a safer and more supportive work environment for all employees.

References

- Akter, R., Teicher, J., y Alam, Q. (2024). Gender-Based Violence and Harassment in Bangladesh's Ready-Made Garments (RMG) Industry: Exploring Workplace Well-Being Issues in Policy and Practice. *Sustainability*, 16(5), 2132.
- Anjum, A., Ming, X., Siddiqi, A. F., y Rasool, S. F. (2018). An empirical study analyzing job productivity in toxic workplace environments. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 15(5), 1035.
- Baillien, E., De Cuyper, N., y De Witte, H. (2011). Job autonomy and workload as antecedents of workplace bullying: A two-wave test of Karasek's job demand control model for targets and perpetrators. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 84, 191–208.
- Berdahl, J. L., y Moore, C. (2006). Workplace harassment: double jeopardy for minority women. *Journal of applied psychology*, 91(2), 426.
- Bowling, N. A., y Beehr, T. A. (2006). Workplace harassment from the victim's perspective: a theoretical model and meta-analysis. *Journal of applied psychology*, 91(5), 998.
- Bowling, N. A., y Michel, J. S. (2011). Why do you treat me badly? The role of attributions regarding the cause of abuse in subordinates' responses to abusive supervision. *Work y Stress*, 25(4), 309–320.
- Brewster, M. E., Velez, B., DeBlaere, C., y Moradi, B. (2012). Transgender individuals' workplace experiences: the applicability of sexual minority measures and models. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 59(1), 60.
- Buchanan, N. T., y Fitzgerald, L. F. (2008). Effects of racial and sexual harassment on work and the psychological well-being of African American women. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 13(2), 137.
- Claybourn, M. (2011). Relationships between moral disengagement, work characteristics and workplace harassment. *Journal of business ethics*, 100(2), 283–301.
- Corbett, E., Barnett, J., Yeomans, L., y Blackwood, L. (2024). "That's just the way it is": bullying and harassment in STEM academia. *International Journal of STEM Education*, 11(1), 27.
- Einarsen, S., Hoel, H., Zapf, D., & Cooper, C. (2003). The concept of bullying at work: the European tradition. In *Bullying and Emotional Abuse in the Workplace: International Perspectives in Research and Practice* (pp. 3–30). Taylor & Francis.
- Elbeddini, A., Wen, C. X., Tayefehchamani, Y., y To, A. (2020). Mental health issues impacting pharmacists during COVID-19. *Journal of pharmaceutical policy and practice*, 13(1), 46.

- Enogieru, I., Blewitt-Golsch, A. L., Hart, L. J., LeGrand, S., Whetten, K., Ostbye, T., y Johnson, C. Y. (2024). Prevalence and correlates of workplace violence: descriptive results from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. *Occupational and environmental medicine*, 81(4), 178-183.
- Epstein, D., y Goodman, L. A. (2019). Discounting Women: Doubting Domestic Violence Survivors' Credibility and Dismissing Their Experiences" 167. *U Pa L Rev*, 2, 399.
- Ganes, A., y Sunder, P. (2024). A scoping review of mental health status in Australian medical students and doctors-in-training (DiT). *Health Science Reports*, 7(6), e2214.
- Gómez, J. M. (2015). Microaggressions and the enduring mental health disparity: Black Americans at risk for institutional betrayal. *Journal of Black Psychology*, 41(2), 121-143.
- Gruber, J. E., y Smith, M. D. (1995). Women's responses to sexual harassment: A multivariate analysis. *Basic and applied social psychology*, 17(4), 543-562.
- Hewett, R., Liefoghe, A., Visockaite, G., y Roongrerngsuke, S. (2018). Bullying at work: Cognitive appraisal of negative acts, coping, wellbeing, and performance. *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 23(1), 71.
- Ho, S. L. (2024). Japan's new anti-harassment law and the ironic legitimization of workplace harassment against women managers. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 103, p. 102884). Pergamon.
- Hoel, H., Rayner, C., y Cooper, C. L. (1999). Workplace bullying. *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 14, 195-230.
- Hunter, B. (2005). Emotion work and boundary maintenance in hospital-based midwifery. *Midwifery*, 21(3), 253-266.
- Huo, Y., Lam, W., y Chen, Z. (2012). Am I the only one this supervisor is laughing at? Effects of aggressive humor on employee strain and addictive behaviors. *Personnel Psychology*, 65(4), 859-885.
- King, E. C., Chan, J., Benn, A., Michener, M. B., Van Belle, T. A., y McKay, S. M. (2024). Shifting the safety culture: evaluation of a novel approach to understanding and responding to workplace harassment and violence experienced by homecare workers. *Workplace Health y Safety*, 21650799241232148.
- Konik, J., y Cortina, L. M. (2008). Policing gender at work: Intersections of harassment based on sex and sexuality. *Social Justice Research*, 21, 313-337.
- Lee, D. (1997). Interviewing men: Vulnerabilities and dilemmas. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 20, No. 4, pp. 553-564). Pergamon.
- Longpré, N., y Turner, S. (2024). Dark tetrad at work: perceived severity of bullying, harassment, and workplace deviance. *International journal of offender therapy and comparative criminology*, 0306624X241236715.
- Lonsway, K. A., Cortina, L. M., y Magley, V. J. (2008). Sexual harassment mythology: Definition, conceptualization, and measurement. *Sex roles*, 58, 599-615.
- Lopez, S. H., Hodson, R., y Roscigno, V. J. (2009). Power, status, and abuse at work: General and sexual harassment compared. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 50(1), 3-27.
- Magley, V. J., Hulin, C. L., Fitzgerald, L. F., y DeNardo, M. (1999). Outcomes of self-labeling sexual harassment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84(3), 390.
- Marchand, A., Demers, A., y Durand, P. (2005). Does work really cause distress? The contribution of occupational structure and work organization to the experience of psychological distress. *Social science y medicine*, 61(1), 1-14.
- Mansoor, M., Paul, J., Khan, T. I., Abukhait, R., & Hussain, D. (2025). Customer evangelists: Elevating hospitality through digital competence, brand image, and corporate social responsibility. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 126, 104085.
- Neall, A. M., y Tuckey, M. R. (2014). A methodological review of research on the antecedents and consequences of workplace harassment. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 87(2), 225-257.
- Nielsen, M. B., Glasø, L., y Einarsen, S. (2017). Exposure to workplace harassment and the Five Factor Model of personality: A meta-analysis. *Personality and individual differences*, 104, 195-206.
- Quick, J. C., y McFadyen, M. (2017). Sexual harassment: Have we made any progress? *Journal of occupational health psychology*, 22(3), 286.
- Raver, J. L., y Nishii, L. H. (2010). Once, twice, or three times as harmful? Ethnic harassment, gender harassment, and generalized workplace harassment. *Journal of applied psychology*, 95(2), 236.
- Richman, J. A., Flaherty, J. A., y Rospenda, K. M. (1996). Perceived workplace harassment experiences and problem drinking among physicians: Broadening the stress/alienation paradigm. *Addiction*, 91(3), 391-403.
- Rønning, L., Shor, R., Anyan, F., Hjemdal, O., Jakob Bøe, H., Dempsey, C. L., y Espetvedt Nordstrand, A. (2024). The prevalence of sexual harassment and bullying among Norwegian Afghanistan veterans: does workplace harassment disproportionately impact the mental health and life satisfaction of female soldiers? *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 08862605241248432.
- Rospenda, K. M., Richman, J. A., y Shannon, C. A. (2009). Prevalence and mental health correlates of harassment and discrimination in the workplace: Results from a national study. *Journal of interpersonal violence*, 24(5), 819-843.
- Salin, D. (2008). Organisational responses to workplace harassment: An exploratory study. *Personnel review*, 38(1), 26-44.
- Schultz, V. (1997). Reconceptualizing sexual harassment. *Yale LJ*, 107, 1683.
- Sloven, N., y Williams, D. R. (2014). Discrimination, other psychosocial stressors, and self-reported sleep duration and difficulties. *Sleep*, 37(1), 147-156.
- Volokh, E. (1991). Freedom of speech and workplace harassment. *UCLA L. Rev.*, 39, 1791.
- Zhang, C., Irfan, M., y Sial, J. I. (2024). Effect of Workplace Harassment on Organizational Cynicism with the Mediation of Perceived Incivility and the Moderating Role of Perceived Organizational Obstruction in Pakistan. *Heliyon*.
- Ziano, I., y Polman, E. (2024). Prototypes of victims of workplace harassment. *Personality and social psychology bulletin*, 01461672241235388.results from the National Transgender Discrimination Survey. *Occupational and environmental medicine*, 81(4), 178-183.

