Sexual Harassment

The issue of sexual harassment has been well documented in the workplace for several years. For example, in 1980 the Working Women's Institute concluded that sexual harassment was the single most widespread occupational hazard women face in the workforce (Lott, 1994). The attention given to sexual harassment was dramatically increased by (1) the 1991 Senate hearings involving Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas and his accuser, Anita Hill; and (2) the U.S. Navy Tailhook scandal involving the mistreatment of women by U.S. Navy personnel.

What constitutes sexual harassment has been the central issue of several court cases. The "reasonable woman" standard was applied as the appropriate legal criterion for determining whether sexual harassment had occurred: If a reasonable woman would consider behavior offensive even though a man would not, the court would rule that sexual harassment had occurred (Fitzgerald & Ormerod, 1991). Sexual harassment does indeed occur, according to Barnett and Rivers (1996) (cited in Peterson & Gonzalez, 2000); more than 50% of working women will experience sexual harassment in their jobs. Other factors used to determine when a behavior is considered offensive are (1) if the behavior was judged extreme, (2) if the victim was responsible for what happened, (3) if the perpetrator was a direct supervisor of the victim, and (4) if there was significant frequency of occurrence (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2010).

In essence, sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual overtures or requests for sexual favors. A legal term used in sexual harassment is *quid pro quo*, which indicates some type of reward is offered for sexual favors. This kind of behavior creates an offensive and hostile work environment and is most demeaning to women. In many organizations today, sexual harassment awareness and prevention are part of incoming training for new staff. In addition, ongoing sensitivity training programs include such topics as how people respond to being touched when engaged in a conversation, what is considered as offensive physical contact, cultural differences in physical contact, and inappropriate verbal statements and comments about physical appearance. The major goal here is to promote appropriate interactions between women and men in the workplace (Muchinsky, 2003).

ievement, Competition, and Self-Destructive Behavior

In the contemporary workforce, men and women will both face events and conditions that are stressful. The fact is they are likely to experience some of the same problems and concerns in the workplace. Some examples include the need to achieve and succeed, deal appropriately with competition, and be able to relax while participating in leisure activities. The rationale here is that when women and men experience highly competitive and demanding work environments, they will develop similar stressful conditions and reactions. Men, however, have been the main focus of research dealing with achievement, competition, leisure, and self-destructive behavior. More recently, women have been studied to determine their reactions to these factors (Schafer, 2000).

As early as the 1990s, Russo, Kelly, and Deacon (1991) suggested that men are conditioned to perceive career success and achievement as primary measurements of manhood and masculinity. These researchers suggested that a man's work represents

his status in society and is the primary base for measuring success over the life span. What is suggested here is that men validate their masculinity through competition at work. Intense competition among men in the workplace can result in some men being very reluctant to be honest with their peers, and subsequently they have difficulty in developing interpersonal relationships. Hence, intense competition among men and between men and women may be highly related to stressful work environments and work anxiety. The point here is that both men and women experience work-related stress including occupational insecurity, especially during economic downturns (Rice, 1999; Zunker 2008).

Closely related to issues of dealing with competition are behavions that lead to health care problems. One pattern of work over commitment is the widely studied Type A behavioral pattern. Friedman and Rosenman (1974), Strube (1991), and Barlow and Durand, (2009) conceptualized a model of how men behave in the workplace and designated the two masculine styles of functioning as Type A and Type B. Type A persons have an accelerated overall lifestyle, with involvement in multiple functions. They are overcommitted to their vocations or professions, have an intense drive to achieve, and develop feelings of guilt when relaxing. Other characteristics include excessive drive, impatience, competitiveness, restlessness; abrupt speech; nervous gestures; and rapid walking, eating, and moving. Type B persons are the opposite. They are characterized as being serene, having the ability to relax, and lacking a sense of time urgency.

The general consensus of opinion has been that there are more Type A behavior males than females. Greenglass (1991), however, found that professional women were predominantly Type A. Type A behavior has been linked to cardiovascular problems; workers who experience stress may have a higher rate of heart disease than non–Type A workers (Baker, Dearborn, Hastings, & Hamberger, 1988; Houston & Kelly, 1987). A five-year study at the Duke University Medical Center found that mental stress could hold the key to future heart problems. The major conclusion was not surprising— reducing abnormal responses to mental stress can lead to a reduction of cardiac problems (Jiang et al., 1996).

In the workplace, Type A individuals have an intense sense of time urgency and attempt to participate in most tasks, job assignments, and events that are ongoing in the work environment. Type A individuals give the impression that they can meet all challenges and successfully cope with any challenge, especially at work (Zunker, 2008). Schafer (2000) suggests that a Type A personality pattern includes most of the following: insecurity status, time urgency, hyperaggressiveness, free-floating hostility, and the drive toward self-destruction. In addition, Type A behavior characterizes women as well as men in our society. He points out that there has been a sharp rise in Type A behavior among women since the 1970s.

In the 1980s, Braiker (1986) suggested that contemporary women who work and live under excessive stressful conditions are more accurately described by what she coined as Type E. She distinguishes Type A from Type E by suggesting that achievement-oriented women experience stressful conditions not only in their career, but also in their personal life. Type E women have the tendency to become involved in numerous activities to the point of role overload. Braiker (1986) characterizes Type E women as needing to do things perfectly, being overly concerned to please others, having a strong need to prove self to everyone, wanting to have it all, striving to get people to need them, having difficulty in relaxing, and demonstrating a strong desire to be everything to everybody.

Cognitive restructuring is often suggested as an effective intervention to modify Type A behavior. The following recommendation could also be used as an intervention strategy for women who are identified with Type E behavior patterns. In cognitive

restructuring, individuals learn to recognize behaviors that are self-destructive by acknowledging unrealistic and irrational beliefs that have reinforced their Type A and Type E behavior patterns. Counseling sessions, designed to promote cognitive restructuring, help individuals identify anxiety-arousing situations so they can take steps to modify their behavior. Interventions include stress-management methods related to time management, use of constructive self-talk for building self-esteem, reducing anger, and redefining role requirements.

In sum, this chapter introduces some sets of problems and concerns associated with gender issues that influence behavior of women and men in multiple life roles. The focus of concerns has been devoted to career development, career choice, and work-related issues. Career counselors, however, recognize that they are to address the needs of the total person, including multiple roles. Gender issues do indeed represent a very pervasive influence in the lives of clients who seek counseling. One core element of gender concerns is gender stereotyping. One's beliefs about gender typing greatly influences career identity, interpersonal relationships, how one communicates, and one's worldview in general. The fear of being perceived as feminine is a driving force behind exaggerated masculinity. Men, for example, fear being perceived as being overly emotional and it is not unusual for men of this ilk to have difficulty when interacting with women.

It should not surprise anyone that sexual harassment creates offensive and hostile work environments. Small as well as large companies provide sensitivity training in an attempt to build more cohesive work relationships. In contemporary workplaces men and women face stressful conditions including the need to achieve, outdo competition, and be considered successful. Closely related to these issues are stress-related self-destructive behaviors that can lead to health problems. Learning to deal with stress is an essential task in order to manage all life roles in contemporary society (Zunker, 2008).

The call is for a counseling approach that is sensitive to gender and recognizes that behavior should be studied in gendered contexts (Denmark, 1994). Galliano (2003) also suggests that gender-related norms are best evaluated in situational and contextual interactions between women and men; shared work roles are expected to be the focus of research in future workplace environments. As Spence (1999) indicated, gender development is a complex process that is both multifaceted and multidimensional.

Workplace and Family Needs

Women and men also share work roles in dual-career marriages albeit in a different context than the workplace. In recent years, both parents often have to work to fulfil financial responsibilities, but it should also be recognized that many women choose to work and pursue a career. In greater numbers women are assuming the dual role of homemaker and worker (Newman & Newman, 2009). Families in which both parents work are referred to as either dual-career or dual-earner households. Both types share some common goals and issues. The term dual career is usually reserved for families in which both spouses hold professional, managerial, or technical jobs.

As more women have changed roles, men also have changed by assuming a larger share of the homemaker role. But sharing responsibilities, particularly in the home, has caused role conflict among other problems. In this next section of this chapter I will discuss some aspects of family dynamics in a changing world and the challenges couples face in dual-career roles. Issues facing dual-career families include