

Do degrading TV portrayals of women cause gender harassment?

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A new study in *Psychology of Women Quarterly* considers whether objectifying women in television and harassment are causally linked. Researchers Silvia Galdi, Anne Maass, and Mara Cadinu designed two experimental studies that used video materials of actual TV shows to investigate the causal relationship between TV exposure and harassing conduct.

Together, the findings suggest degrading TV portrayals of women play a causal role in both [gender harassment](#) and sexual-coercion intentions and this relationship with gender harassment is at least in part attributable to a shift in masculinity norms. Therefore objectifying TV productions seem to create a normative context conducive to gender harassment, attesting to the responsibility of the mass media in promoting a climate that is hostile toward women.

"These conceptions go beyond harassment by men but involve society at large, including responsibilities of women and men to promote a different set of values," the researchers stated. "On a positive note then, the same TV programs can also promote a change in social and cultural norms, including those related to masculinity, which suggests that they can be used as means to reduce [sexual harassment](#) behavior and more generally to promote respect for women and men."

More information: Find out more by reading the full article, titled "Objectifying Media: Their Effect on Gender Role Norms and Sexual Harassment of Women" in *Psychology of Women Quarterly*.

Provided by SAGE Publications

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