

## Principal Researcher - Virginia Sánchez – Universidad de Sevilla

**Title:** Can virtual reality enhance adolescent sexual harassment prevention? Testing a new programme.

**Main purpose of the project:** The aim of this project will be to develop, implement and assess the efficacy of a sexual harassment prevention programme (VIRTUAL-PRO). VIRTUAL-PRO will include virtual reality as a tool to test if it encourages empathy, sensitivity, active attitudes towards victims, and reduces aggressive behaviour.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The Translational Psychology and standards of evidence proposed by The Prevention science inspires this study. A RCT longitudinal study will be conducted. There will be at least three waves and three experimental conditions will be designed (a virtual reality intervention, a traditional intervention and a control group).

**Potential results:** The virtual reality component will be most effective in reducing aggressive behaviour in comparison to the traditional programme. It is expected to provide data on the effectiveness of the programme through the following outcomes: beliefs about violence, empathy, and behaviours to help in the face of violence, among others.

**Social relevance of the research:** The project will contribute to the main aims of the "Horizon 2020" Plan. The project addresses the challenge of Changes in Social Innovations because it is focused on the response to the complex phenomenon of adolescent sexual harassment, through providing adolescents with strategies and resources to build healthy relationships.

**Originality/value of the project:** This programme is innovative because of the introduction of virtual reality technology as a tool for violence prevention and it is relevant in Spain given the paucity of adolescent sexual harassment prevention programmes. This project will provide evidence of virtual reality as a prevention tool, specifically in adolescent sexual harassment.