



RESEARCH STUDIES

workplacebullying.org

2013 WBI Survey

Bullying by Industry

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BULLYING BY INDUSTRY
WORKPLACE BULLYING
WORKPLACE BULLYING INSTITUTE - 2013

The purpose of this final 2013 survey was to determine in which industries workplace bullying occurs.

WBI conducts several online surveys each year. Those surveys rely upon self-selected samples of individuals bullied at work because those are the people who visit a website with “workplace bullying” in its name. Site visitors are seeking answers to their personal dilemma caused by bullying. Though this survey is one of those non-scientific surveys, its results can accurately depict the perceptions of workers targeted for bullying at work as contrasted with the views of all adult Americans in our scientific national surveys.

A total of 401 respondents completed this “Industry” survey during the summer of 2013.

The *questions* and proportions for each response are found below.

What is your gender?

.853 *Female*

.147 *Male*

The WBI online survey respondents are typically over 80% women, 85% in this case.

What is your highest level of education?

.322 *Some college / AA*

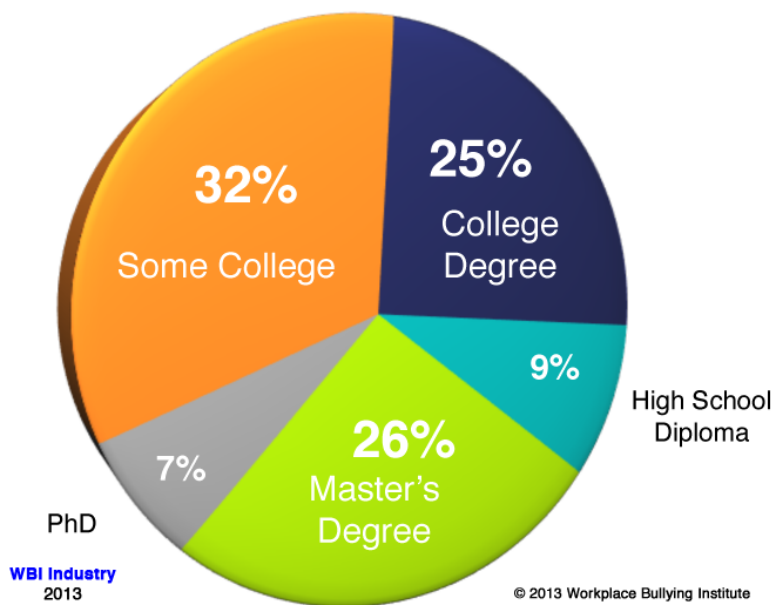
.264 *Master's degree*

.249 *Bachelor's degree*

.092 *High school / GED*

.070 *Doctorate*

.002 *Less than high school*



During your time as a target of workplace bullying, or when you witnessed it happening to others:

What was your age?

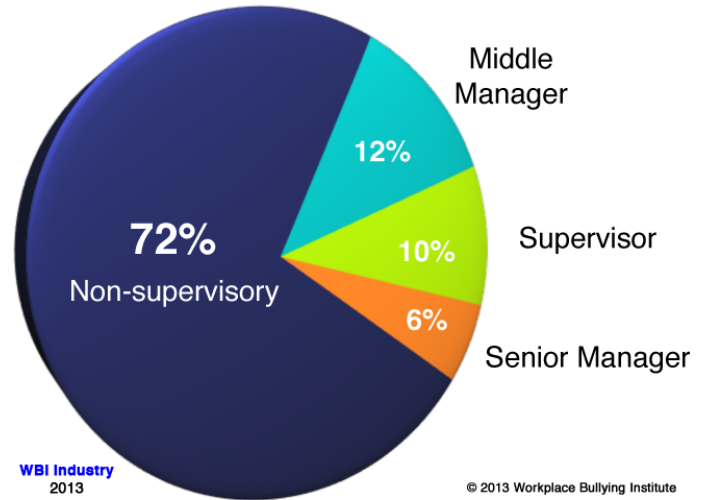
Average reported age was 47 years

What was your employment status?

- .903 Full-time
- .067 Part-time
- .020 Independent contractor
- .010 Temp worker

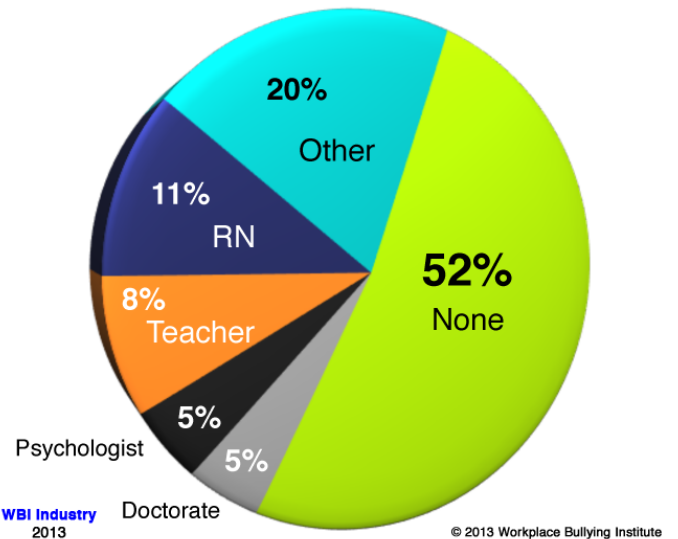
What was your rank?

- .721 Non-supervisory worker
- .120 Middle manager
- .100 Supervisor
- .057 Senior manager/executive
- .002 Owner (n=1)



Were any of the following licenses or professional certificates required?

- .521 N/A
- .195 Other industry specific license (eg. realtor, equipment technician, pilot, etc.)
- .107 RN, LVN, or NP
- .082 Certified teacher
- .047 MD, JD, or PhD
- .047 Counselor/Psychologist (eg. MHP, MFCC, etc.)



Were you a union member?

- .741 Non-union
- .259 Union

In what industry did you work?

Healthcare

- .140 *Healthcare - Hospital*
- .110 *Healthcare - Clinic/Office*
- .015 *Healthcare - In-home*

Education

- .120 *Education - College/University*
- .110 *Education - K-12*

Service Industry

- .050 *Customer Service*
- .040 *Retail*
- .005 *Restaurant / Fast food*
- .005 *Hospitality*

Manufacturing

- .050 *Manufacturing*

IT

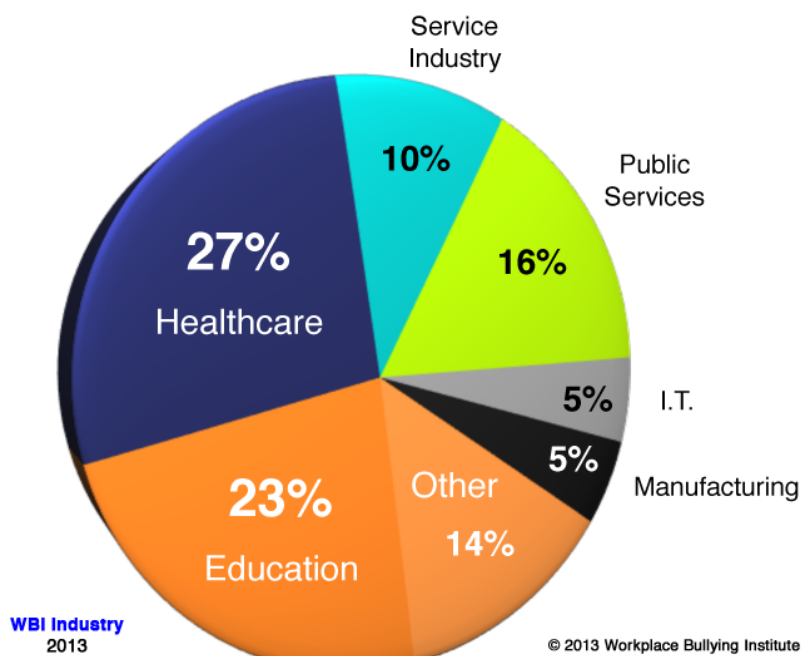
- .045 *IT*

Public Services

- .122 *Public Services (Fire, EMT, USPS, ect.)*
- .017 *Law Enforcement / Corrections / Security*
- .025 *Defense / Defense related*

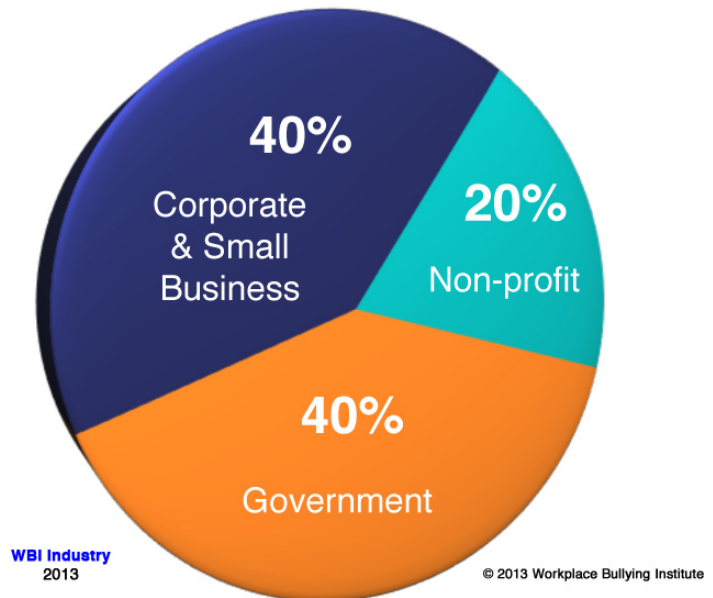
Other

- .032 *Other Financial*
- .022 *Skilled Trades*
- .022 *Legal*
- .020 *Banking*
- .015 *Travel & Transportation*
- .015 *Construction*
- .012 *Entertainment*
- .007 *Agriculture*



In what sector?

.318	<i>Corporate, medium to large business</i>
.171	<i>State / Provincial</i>
.129	<i>Large non-profit</i>
.096	<i>County / Regional</i>
.086	<i>Small business</i>
.068	<i>City Government</i>
.066	<i>Small non-profit</i>
.053	<i>Federal U.S.</i>
.013	<i>Federal Canada</i>



Conclusions

For years we have been saying that healthcare and education are the prime industries most prone to bullying. This 2013 study supports our conjecture with data.

The reasoning for the bullying proneness is that these two fields attract workers motivated to help others. They are prosocial, the “do gooders.” People entering those fields want to heal, help, teach, develop impressionable minds, and see the good in others. While focused on the work, with their backs figuratively turned to the politics and abusers in the workplace, they bring a vulnerability to attack. Stereotypically, teachers and nurses are easily exploited targets. And like all targets, they only seek to be left alone to do the work they are paid to accomplish.

Bullying is endemic to nursing. Within the profession, bullying is referred to as “lateral or horizontal violence, suggesting nurse-on-nurse bullying. The mantra is “nurses eat their young.” Of course, studies show that physicians bully nurses, too. It is sad to think that bullying be considered so routine that it is normalized and no longer shocks the profession.

Bullying of teachers by other teachers and administrators is especially galling given the extraordinary attention paid to student bullying. How in the world can youngsters ever be persuaded to stop when they witness adult bullying in the schools? Adults are physically modeling the same acts they are verbally deploring. Actions speak louder than words. A teacher humiliated in front of students is robbed of her or his moral authority to manage the classroom effectively. And parents learn which teachers they can safely attack and demoralize by following the lead of administrators.

The third-ranked industry is public service — government. There the most significant problem is the quality of supervision. Few managers are adequately trained. Managers lacking the interpersonal skills of listening, coaching, effective training and caring for workers tend to supervise aggressively to mask their incompetence. Governments, with their starved budgets, first cut training to “save.” Unfortunately, the consequence is to inflict health-harming mistreatment on public sector workforce.

The diversity of survey respondents clarifies any misunderstanding that bullying is an affliction of blue collar workers only. Supervisors, middle managers and senior managers were also bullied (in the WBI 2010 U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey, 35% of bullied targets were these manager groups combined). With respect to education of targets, 32% had some college, 25% were college graduates, and 33% possess graduate degrees. These findings refute stereotypes about unsophisticated targets. Instead, the findings bolster our long-held contention that targets are selected because of the threat they pose to insecure, perhaps less educated, perpetrators.

In conclusion, our anecdotal experience with over 10,000 callers seeking advice from the Workplace Bullying Institute is backed by this 2013 study.

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