

Education & Workplace Bullying: 2010 WBI Survey

There are many myths and misconceptions about workplace bullying advanced by disbelievers and opponents. One portrayal is that bullying affects only the uneducated, unskilled workers.

The [WBI 2003 online survey](#) reported that the five top reasons individuals are targeted for bullying, in rank order, were: (1) refusal to be subservient (being independent), (2) being more technically skilled than the bully, (3) being liked by co-workers/customers (being the go-to expert), (4) being ethical and honest, and (5) not being sufficiently political. Thus, people are targeted for their strengths and the threats they pose to the defensive, narcissistic perpetrator.

In the scientific (nationally representative) 2010 WBI U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey, respondents could check whether they had a college degree (or beyond) or whether they did not have a degree. That allows us to determine if the reported experiences with bullying differed according to education level.

The prevalence question given to respondents was: “At work, what is your experience with any or all of the following types of repeated mistreatment: sabotage by others that prevented work from getting done, verbal abuse, threatening conduct, intimidation or humiliation?” Here are the responses sorted by education and compared to the overall sample.

	Currently Bullied	Been Bullied, Not Now	Total Experienced Bullying	Witnessed It Only	Not Bullied/Not Witnessed
No College	7%	26%	33%	14%	53%
College Degree +	11	26	37	18	45
Full Nat'l Sample	8.8	25.7	34.5	15.5	49.6

Note that the respondents with more formal education reported a higher bullying rate. Not having a college degree was associated with a higher denial of bullying rate. Myth busted.

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Zogby International was commissioned by the Workplace Bullying Institute to conduct an online survey of 2,092 adults from 8/18/10 to 8/23/10. The margin of error is +/- 2.2 percentage points. 2,082 individuals declared an educational level.