

## Politics & Workplace Bullying: 2010 WBI Survey

New research findings from the 2010 Workplace Bullying Institute national scientific survey regarding political party affiliation and political ideology.

Because bullying ignores gender and rank boundaries, it makes sense that hyper-aggressive perpetrators of abusive misconduct do not identify with a particular political party. Nor are targets selected principally based on a political ideology.

However, in the 2007 WBI survey and now again in the 2010 WBI national survey, the reported prevalence rates for bullying differ based on party affiliation and ideology. Here are the results and comparisons with the national average.

Question: “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?”

National Prevalence Statistics	Bullied Now	Been Bullied	Combined	Witnessed Only	No Bullying Experience
	8.8%	25.7%	34.5%	15.5%	49.6%

Survey respondents were asked if they identified with one of the two major political parties or if they self-identified as independents.

Pol Party Affil	Bullied Now	Been Bullied	Combined	Witnessed Only	No Bullying Experience
Democratic	11%	32%	43%	15%	41%
Independent	9.4	26.2	35.6	13	50.8
Republican	5.7	20	25.7	13.2	60.9

A similar pattern emerges when respondents were asked to identify their political ideology.

Ideology	Bullied Now	Been Bullied	Combined	Witnessed Only	No Bullying Experience
Liberal	14.1%	31%	44.1%	17.2%	37.5%
Moderate	5.9	27.1	33	21.2	44.8
Conservative	6.6	22	28.6	12.3	59

Thus, Republicans and Conservatives reported less bullying and were more likely to report no experience with bullying at all. In other words, party affiliation and ideology may serve as a perceptual filter, a lens through which the phenomenon of bullying is interpreted.

Many people do not realize they are being bullied. It is a shameful experience that one does not readily admit to. It's a stigmatizing act. The findings above illustrate that a conservative perspective makes one less likely to admit that bullying ("repeated mistreatment" as used in the definition in the survey) occurs; conversely, being politically liberal seems to make a person more likely to define observed or experienced misconduct as bullying.

What cannot be determined from the data alone is whether conservatives underestimate bullying that is occurring or if liberals overestimate its occurrence.

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Survey 2. 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. A sampling of Zogby International's online panel, which is representative of the adult population of the U.S., was invited to participate. Slight weights were added to region, party, age, race, religion, gender, education to more accurately reflect the population. The margin of error is +/- 2.2 percentage points.