

# Prevalence of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

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# Our Research Goals and Questions

## Goals

The main goal of our research was to analyze the prevalence of the different forms that sexual harassment takes (physical, verbal) in the workplace.

We wanted to ensure our research could help provide us with a greater understanding of the overall issue of workplace harassment, the forms that it can take, and how we can all collaborate to eliminate those acts.

## Questions

- Is one gender or age group targeted for harassment more than others?
- What types of harassment is the most common (inappropriate jokes, physical touching)?
- Do certain work environments (retail, food) have higher rates of harassment in our data?
- What are the overall trends in our data?

## AGE COMPARISONS IN WORKPLACE SEXUAL HARASSMENT PERCEPTIONS

- The main focus of this study was to determine if sexist attitudes, misconceptions, and general thoughts around sexual harassment are influenced by the perceivers' age.
- The survey concluded that there was a positive relationship between age and the perceptions around sexual harassment.
  - Those who were in the older age bracket believed that fewer inappropriate actions had to take place to constitute sexual harassment.
  - Of the two genders, women believed that less severe actions qualified as sexual harassment than men did.
- This means that elderly women will be the first to call out sexual harassment, and young men will be the last.

## AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION OF SAME AND OTHER GENDER SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

- This study examined how prevalent sexual harassment is between the genders, and whether or not sexual harassment is really a “power issue”.
- They classified sexual harassment as a power issue because it is typically seen between upper level males and lower level females.
- This study found that females had a higher rate of sexual harassment when the aggressor was the opposite gender.
- However, when looking at harassment where the aggressor and victim are the same gender, males suffer far more than females.
- They also found that when males were harassed, they were unaware of the procedures they should follow to report the harassment. They had to be pointed in the right direction.

## ROUTINE ACTIVITIES AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

- Draws from criminological research on victimization and on organizational models of the social context of sexual harassment to propose a routine activities explanation of sexual harassment victimization.
- Authors discuss the features of individuals (target attractiveness) that may make them more or less susceptible to victimization, holding organizational features constant. They test hypotheses from a routine activities explanation of sexual harassment using data from a national company in the U.S. telephone industry.
- The authors find general support for the importance of both organizational features and individual characteristics in the prediction of sexual harassment victimization.

## IMPLICATIONS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE FROM D.O.D. GENDER RELATIONS AND SURVEYS

- Statistical analysis of data from two Department of Defense-wide surveys (2002 and 2006), this paper examines the indicators and co-founders of sexism, sexual harassment, and sexual assault with attention to change during the study period.
- Findings inform a suggested anticipatory model for prevention and intervention in military settings that, based on shared characteristics such as male dominance and authoritarian culture, provide an approximate reference context for criminal justice sexual misconduct best practices consideration.

## **Sexual Discrimination and Harassment in the Hospitality Industry**

- **Study conducted in U.K. found that sexual harassment occurred in several different parts of the world**
- **Study concluded that an all-encompassing explanation for sexual harassment had not been discovered due to the complexity of perpetrators**
- **British managers in the industry did not see the issue as a serious managerial issue**
- **The study found negative consequences of sexual harassment include legal costs, compensation, rapid turnover, bad image, low productivity, additional training and recruitment costs**

## **Sexual Assault and Other Types of Sexual Harassment by Workplace Personnel**

- **Study conducted among military members regarding sexual harassment in the past 12 months**
- **Research attempted to answer three questions:**
  - **Are the variables affecting sexual harassment same as those affecting sexual assault?**
  - **Are the consequences same for sexual harassment and sexual assault?**
  - **Are the variables that influence sexual harassment the same as those that influence sexual assault (organizational climate, job-gender context, organizational power, and sociocultural power)?**

# Data Collection and Problems

- We used Qualtrics as our platform and created a survey that was separated by both gender and age group so we could understand how the issue affected different demographics.
- The survey was sent out anonymously to 500 UVU email addresses.

## Challenge 1

### Response Rate

Out of 500 emails, we received responses from 80, which was about 15% of the total population.

## Challenge 2

### Completion Rate

We had a fairly high completion rate, having 77 out of 80 surveys returned finished, but a 100% rate would have allowed for more accurate data and analysis.

# Data continued

- Our response rate was fairly low, however we did our best to try and boost it. We sent out one reminder email to those that hadn't taken the survey 3 days after we sent it out originally, and we sent out a second email reminder 3 days after that. Overall we gave our respondents about a week to take our survey.
- The second reminder email attracted more people than the first- maybe due to the fact that in the email, we reiterated the fact that the responses were confidential and we didn't know any personal information.

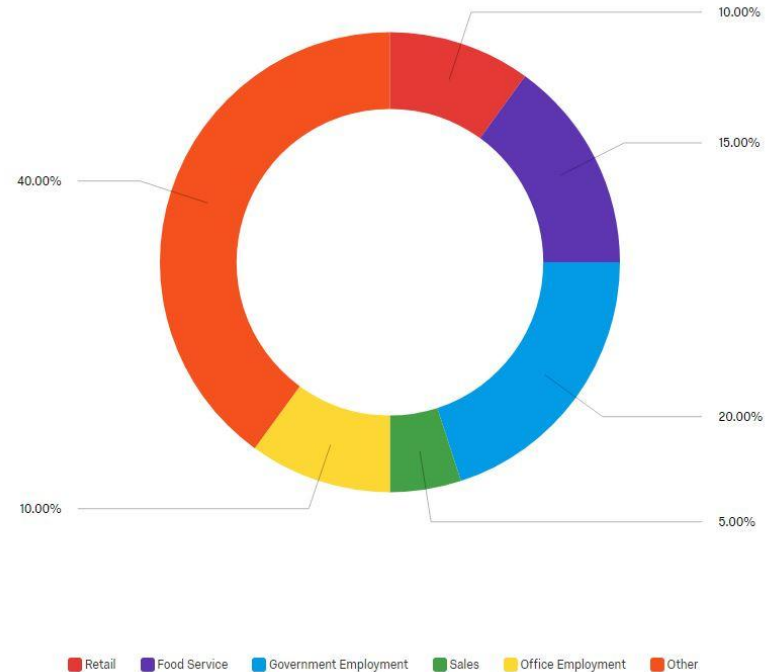
## BASIC QUESTIONS:

“For the purpose of this survey, workplace sexual harassment is any type of unwanted sexual advances, comments, actions, jokes, or physical touch. It can include coercion or requests for sexual favors in exchange for employment opportunities or similar situations. It also includes any other sexually explicit verbal or visual actions, such as being exposed to pornographic materials. Do you have a clear understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment in the workplace?”

Every respondent had to verify they understood the definition to continue on to the survey.

“What is your current type of employment?  
Select all that apply. If none, select other.”

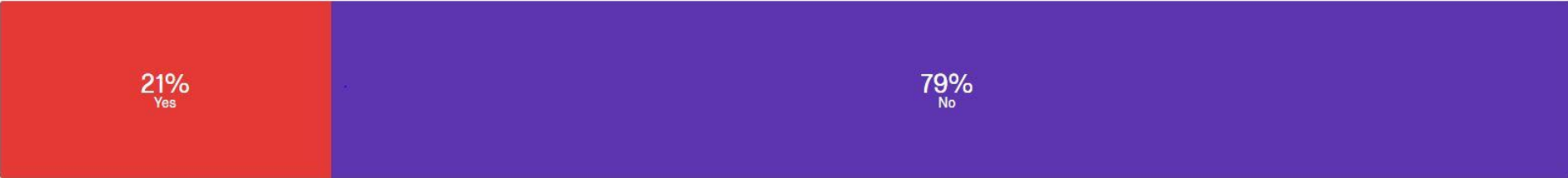
Employment breakdown for males 18-24 population





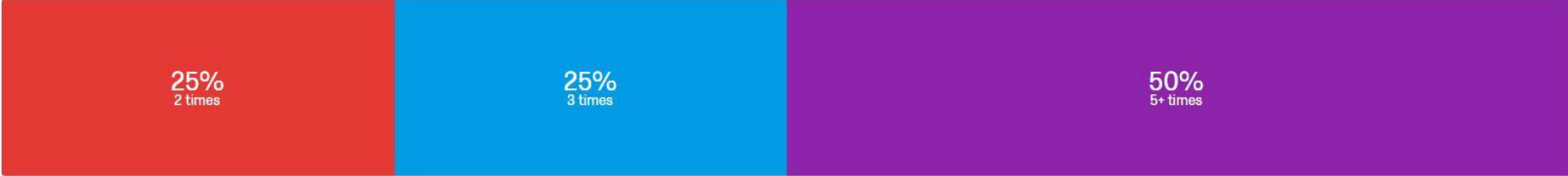
# MALES 18-24: 20 RESPONSES

Have you experienced any sexual harassment in your workplace?



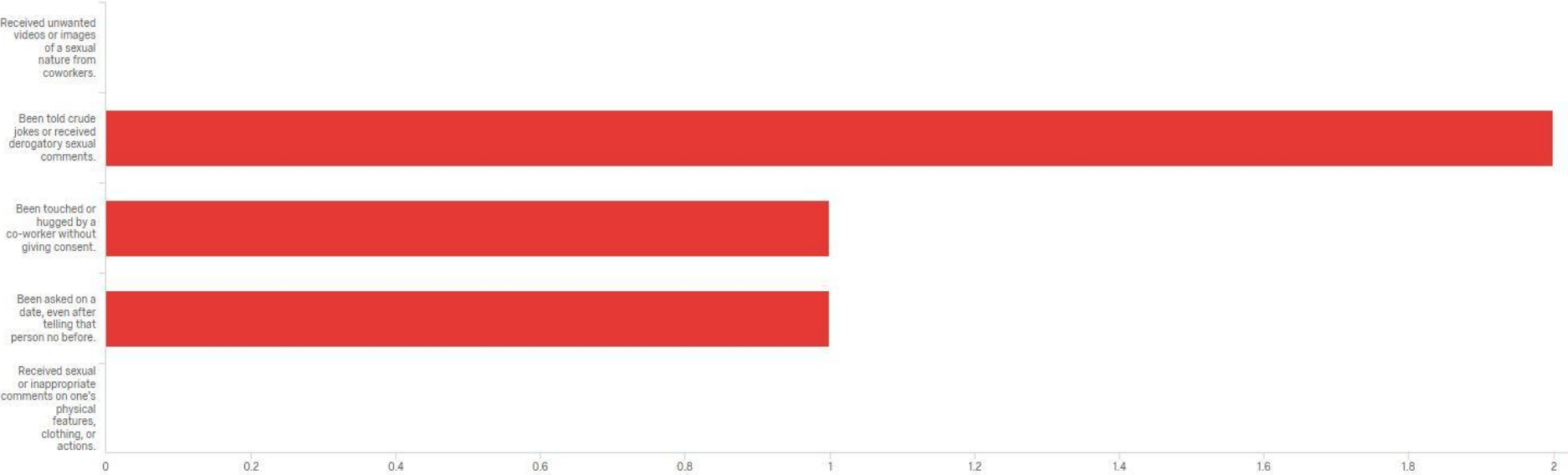
Yes No

If so, how many times?



2 times 3 times 5+ times

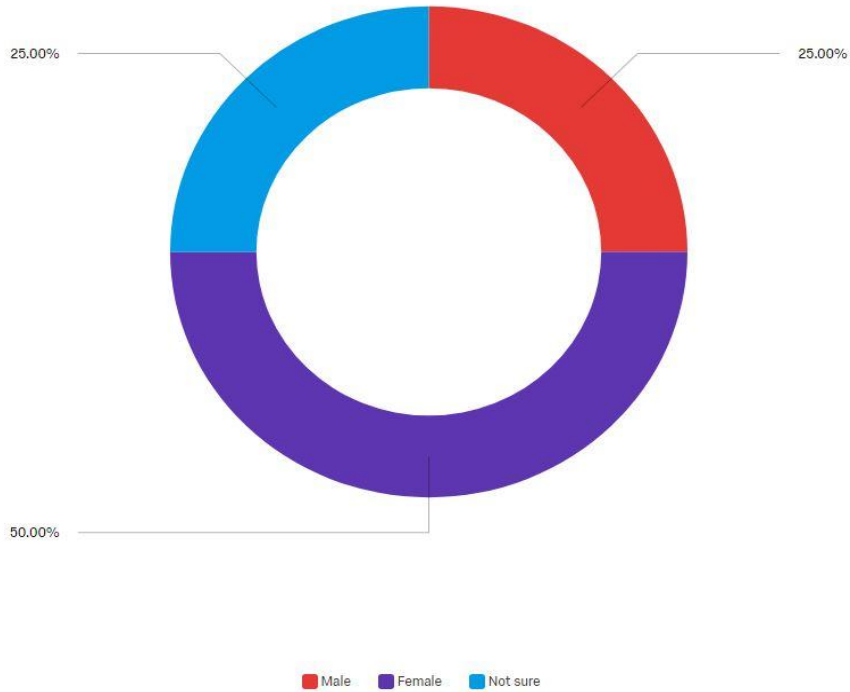
# What type of harassment did you experience?



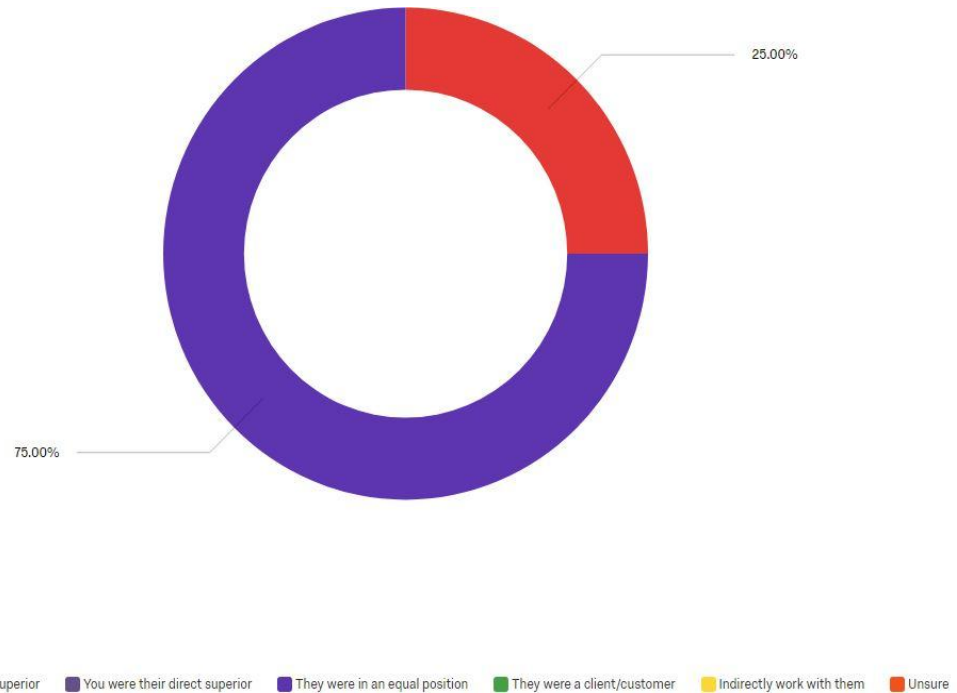
Out of these four respondents, only one reported that they told their employer about the harassment. Here's his responses:

- He reported the harassment every time it occurred- more than 5 times
- Felt his management was very knowledgeable about how to handle the situation
- Believed that the issue was definitely resolved appropriately
- Didn't think his management could improve how they handled the situation

# What was the gender of the harasser?



# What was the working relationship?



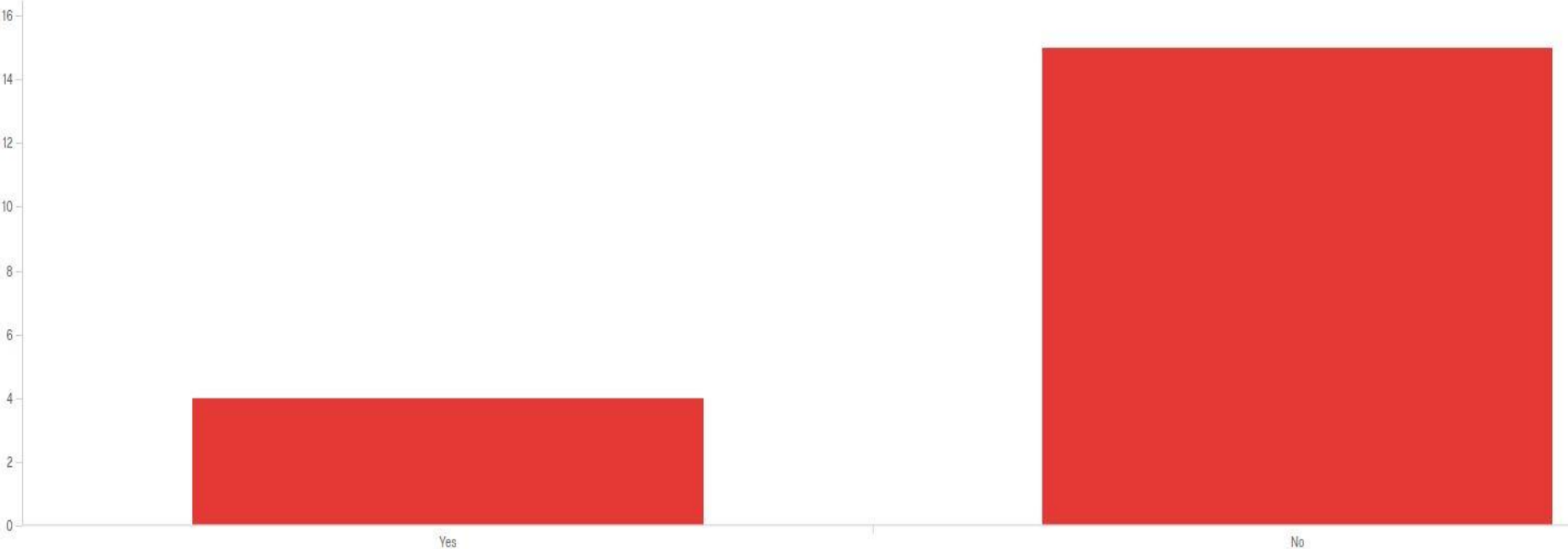
Additionally, all 4 men stated the harasser was between the ages of 21 and 30.

What, if any, was your personal relationship with the harasser at the time of the harassment?

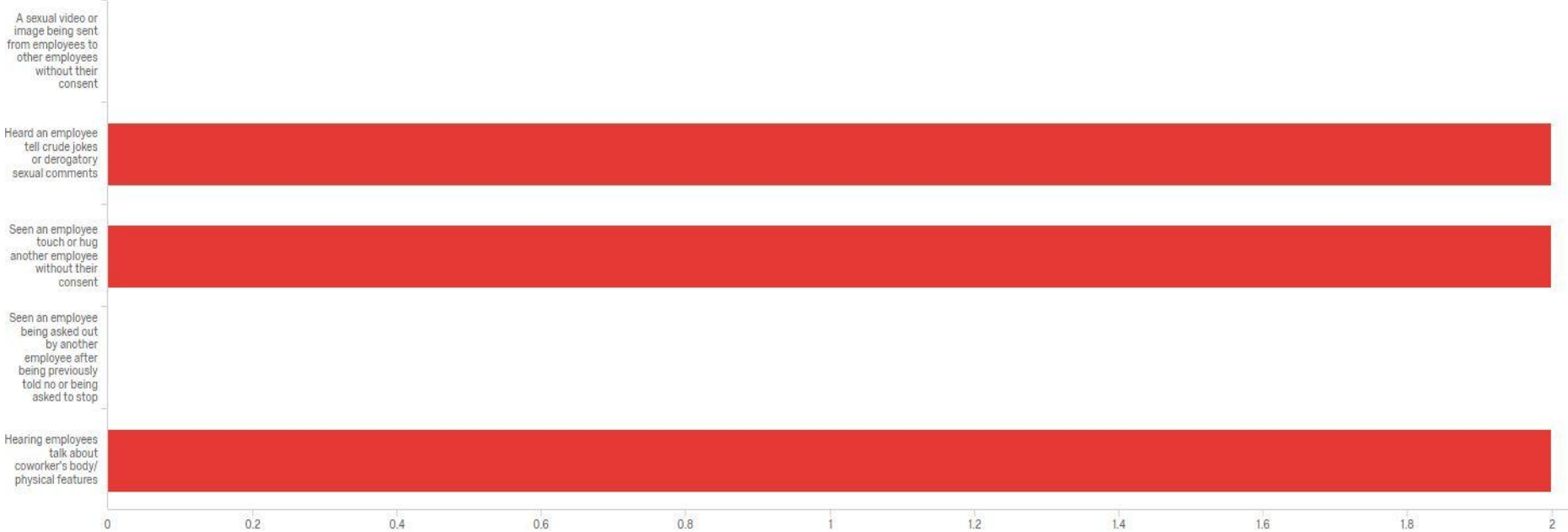
Close friends, acquaintances or casual friend, no relationship, romantic relationship, or other.

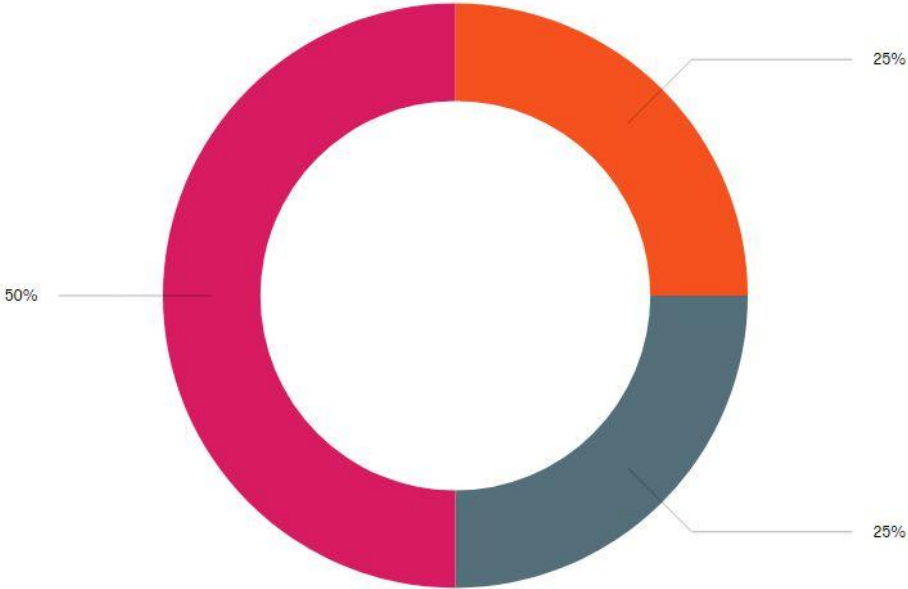
- One person said they were close friends
- Two people said there was no relationship outside of work
- One person said Other

# Have you ever witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace?



# What type of harassment have you witnessed in the workplace?





- Counseled
- Formal Warning
- Written Documentation of Warning
- Leave without Pay
- Termination
- Talked to Informally
- None
- I Don't Know

What disciplinary action was taken against the harasser?



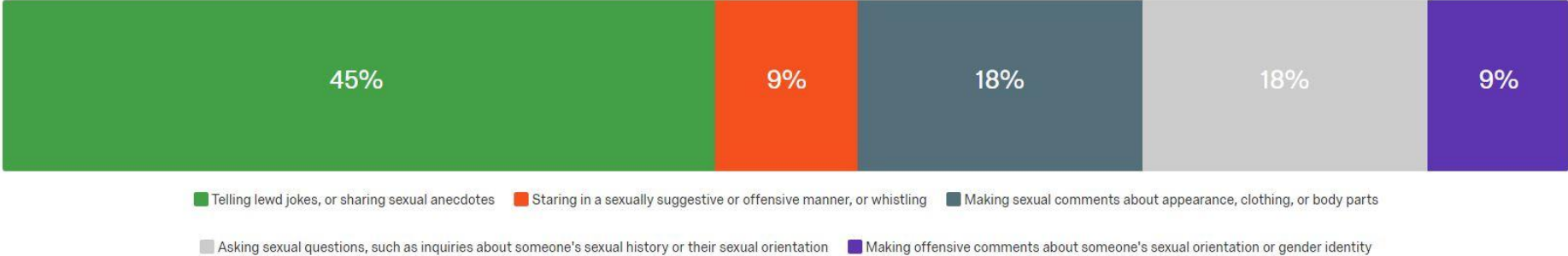
Have you ever knowingly or unknowingly participated in sexual harassment? (Told an inappropriate joke, etc.)



Which of these did you purposely or knowingly participate in?



### Which of these did you accidentally or unknowingly participate in?

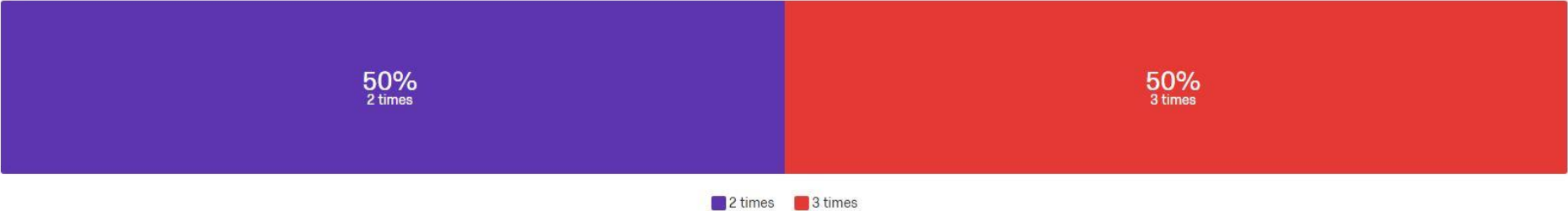


# MALES 25-34: 9 RESPONSES

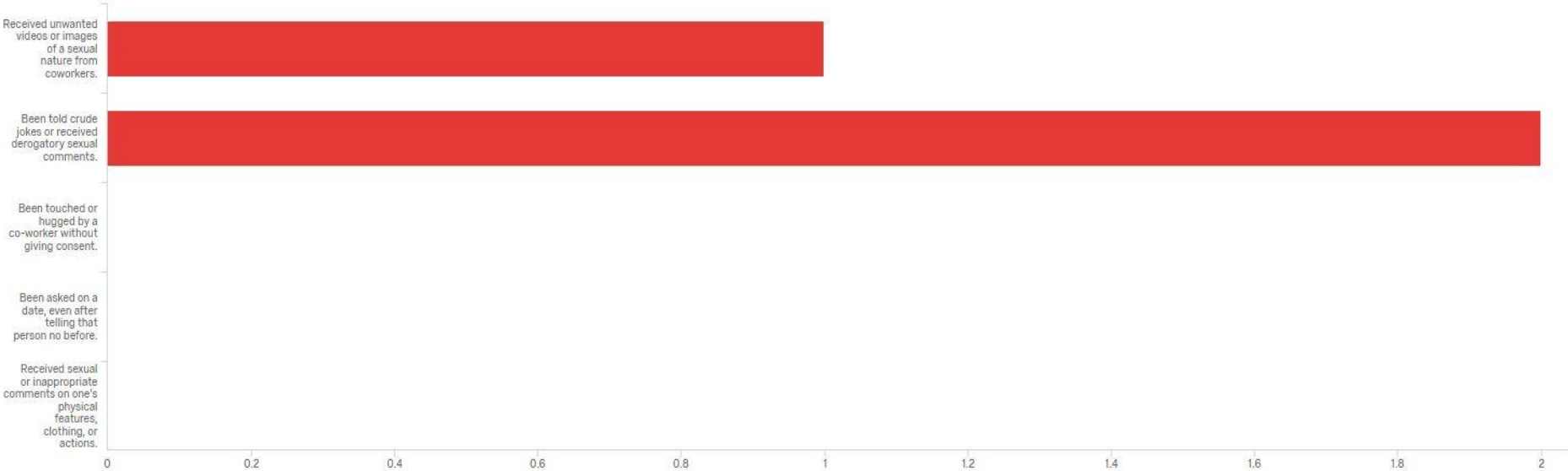
Have you experienced any sexual harassment in your workplace?



If so, how many times?

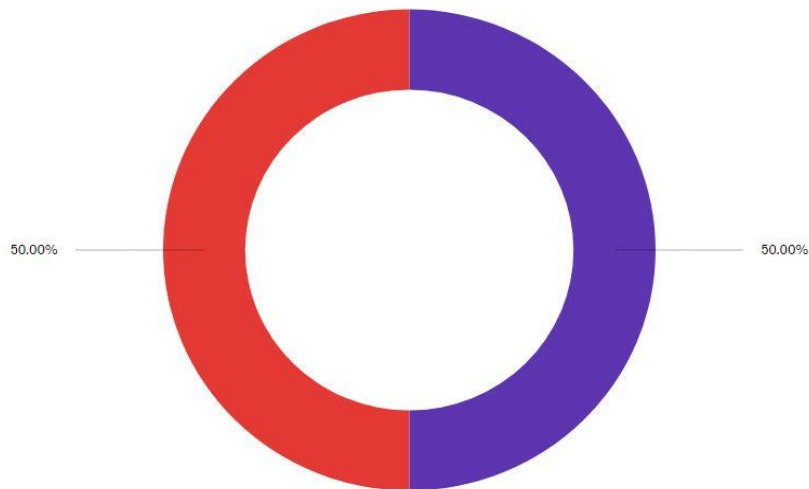


# What type of harassment did you experience?



Out of these two respondents, only one reported that they told their employer about the harassment. Here's his responses:

- He reported the harassment every time it occurred- 2 times
- Felt his management was very knowledgeable about how to handle the situation
- Believed that the issue was definitely resolved appropriately
- Didn't think his management could improve how they handled the situation
- He requested disciplinary action was taken, and reported that the harasser was terminated.
- When asked how the situation could have been handled better, he said "Final written warning was given without HR present. The team member then retaliated to the employee who told on him, which led to immediate termination. HR should have warned him about the risks of retaliation."

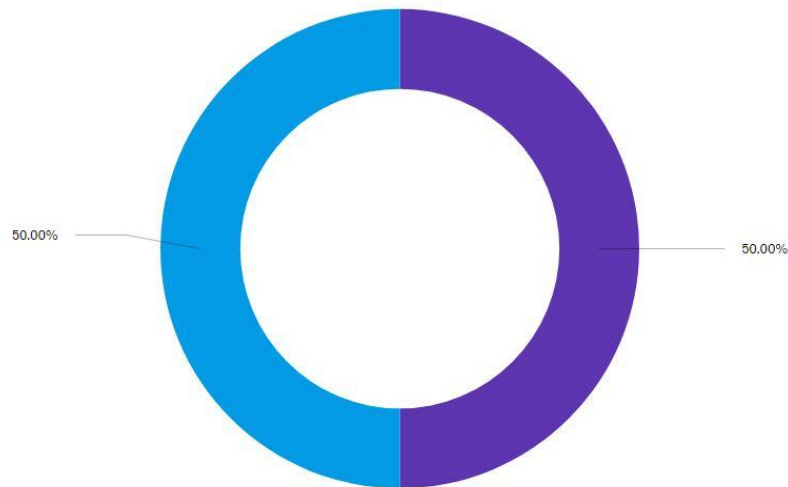


One reported the harasser was between the ages 31-40.

One reported the harasser was under 20.

When asked about the working relationship with the harasser:  
One reported that they were in equal positions.

One reported that they were the harasser's direct supervisor.



Both men that reported being harassed stated that the harasser was male.

One reported the harasser was between the ages 31-40.

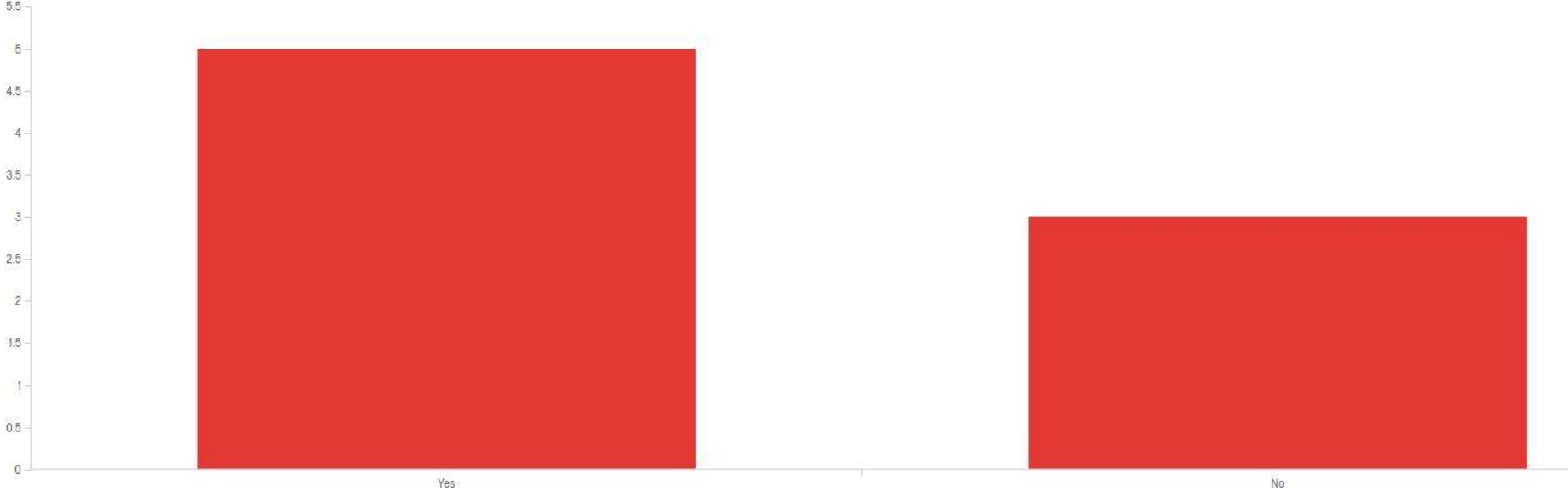
One reported the harasser was under 20.

What, if any, was your personal relationship with the harasser at the time of the harassment?

Close friends, acquaintances or casual friend, no relationship, romantic relationship, or other.

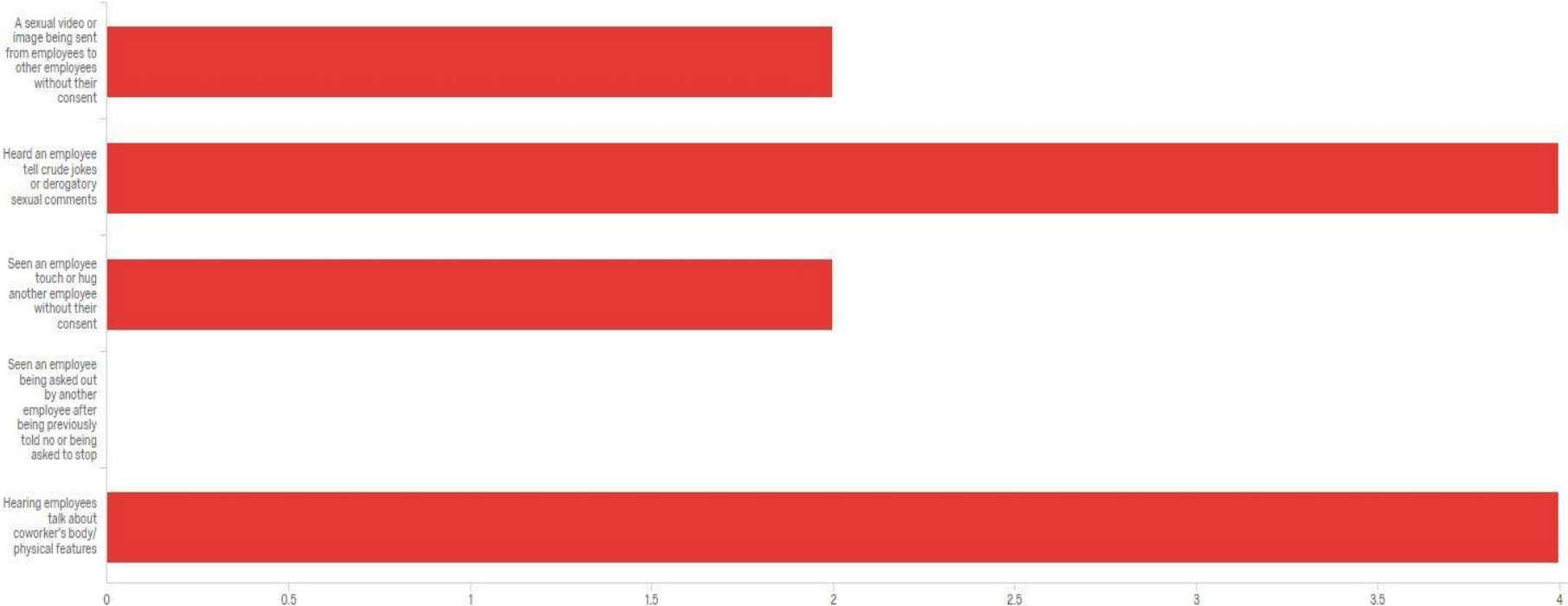
- One person said they were acquaintances
- One person said there was no relationship outside of work

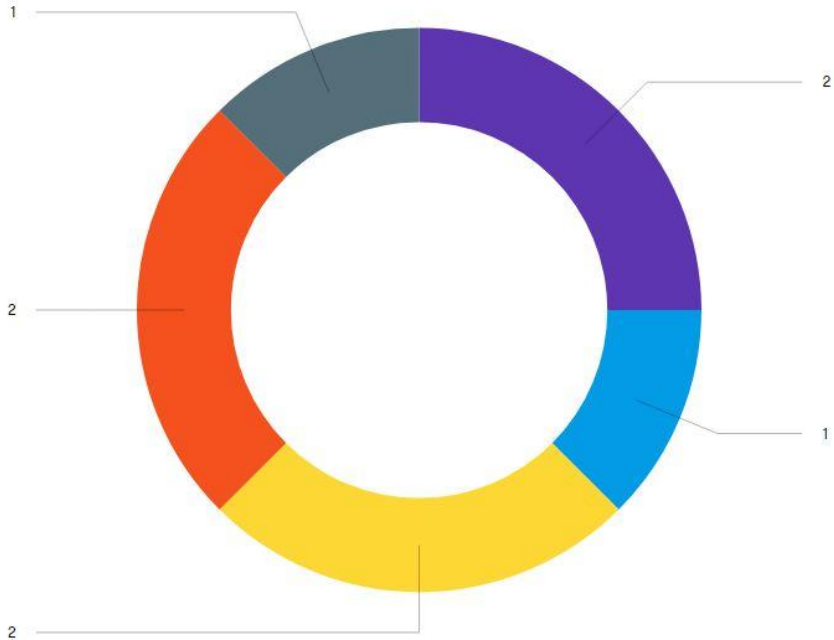
# Have you ever witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace?





# What type of harassment have you witnessed in the workplace?





Counselor Formal Writing Written Documentation of Warning Leave Without Pay Termination Talked to Informally None

What disciplinary action was taken against the harasser?

Have you ever knowingly or unknowingly participated in sexual harassment? (Told an inappropriate joke, etc.)



Which of these did you accidentally or unknowingly participate in?

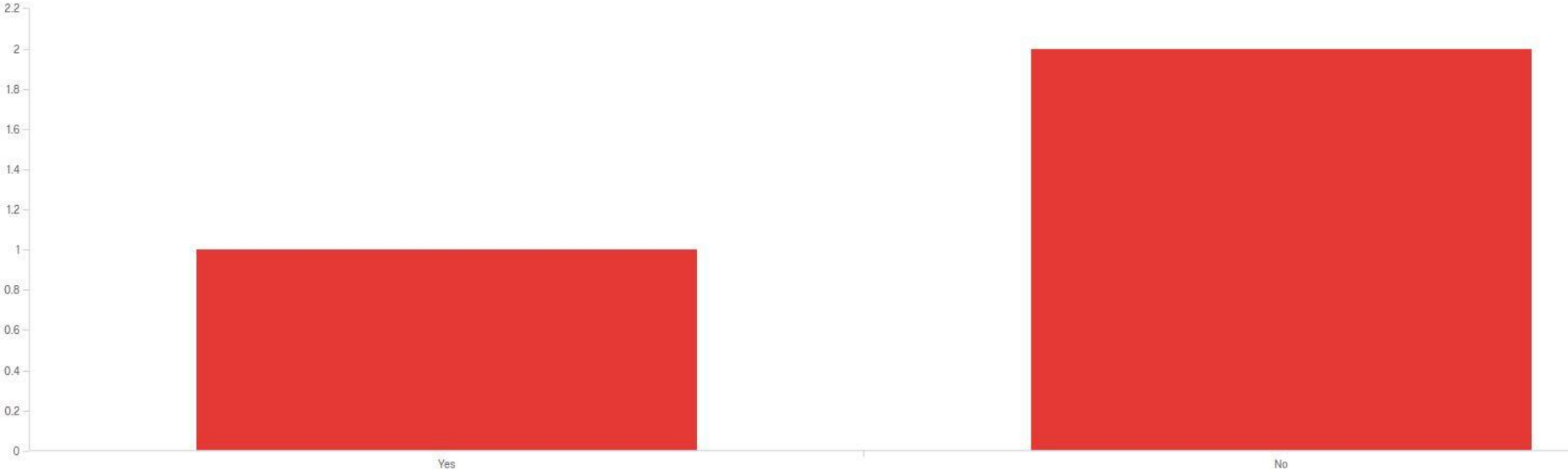


# MALES 35+: 3 RESPONSES

No males in this age group reported being sexually harassed at work.

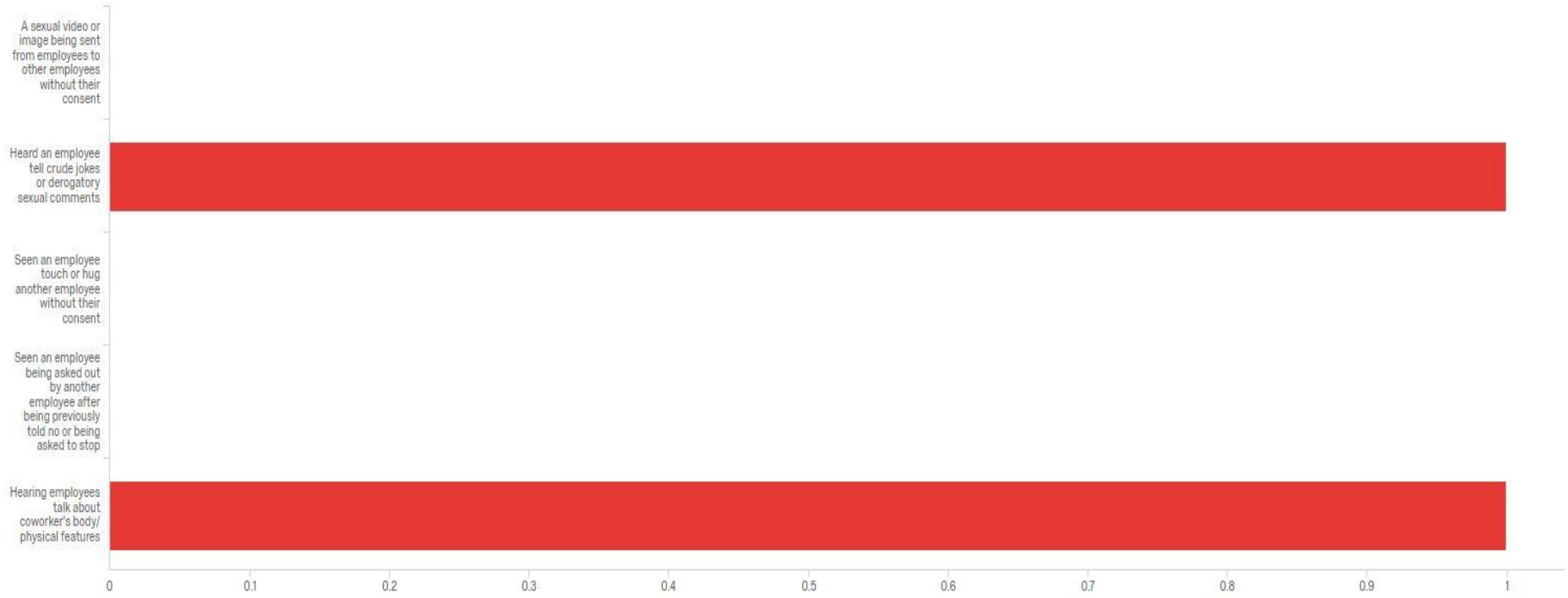
All three men in this age group stated that they had never knowingly or unknowingly participated in or contributed to sexual harassment in the workplace.

Have you ever witnessed sexual harassment in the workplace?



### What type of harassment have you witnessed in the workplace?

- One of the two respondents said that the harasser was counseled after the harassment was reported.



# What We Noticed

- Six out of 32 males have experienced sexual harassment at work- about 20%
  - Of these six males, only two reported the harassment to their employer
  - Three of the harassers were male, two were female, and one was another gender
  - Half of the harassers were in an equal position of power as the victim in the workplace
- 10 out of 32 males have witnessed sexual harassment at work - about 30%
  - Nobody who witnessed the sexual harassment reported it
  - There are two types of sexual harassment that are most commonly witnessed:
    - Hearing employees talk about a coworker's body or physical features
    - Hearing employees tell crude jokes or say derogatory sexual comments

# What We Noticed

- Four out of 32 males have knowingly or purposely sexually harassed someone at work- about 12%
  - Two have sexually harassed someone by telling lewd jokes or sharing sexual anecdotes
  - One has sexually harassed someone by making inappropriate sexual gestures
  - One has sexually harassed someone by making sexual comments about their appearance, body parts, or clothing
- Eight out of 32 males have unknowingly participated in sexual harassment at work- about 9%
  - The most common sexual harassment among this group was
    - Making inappropriate sexual gestures
    - Staring in a sexually suggestive or offensive manner, whistling