

Measuring #MeToo

A National Study on Sexual Harassment and Assault

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This nationally representative survey of 2,219 people was conducted between February and March 2019 by NORC at the University of Chicago, using the AmeriSpeak Panel.

Key Findings

Sexual harassment and assault pose a significant problem, especially for women.

81% of women and 43% of men reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment and/or assault in their lifetime.

More than three in four women (76%) and one in three men (35%) experienced verbal sexual harassment;

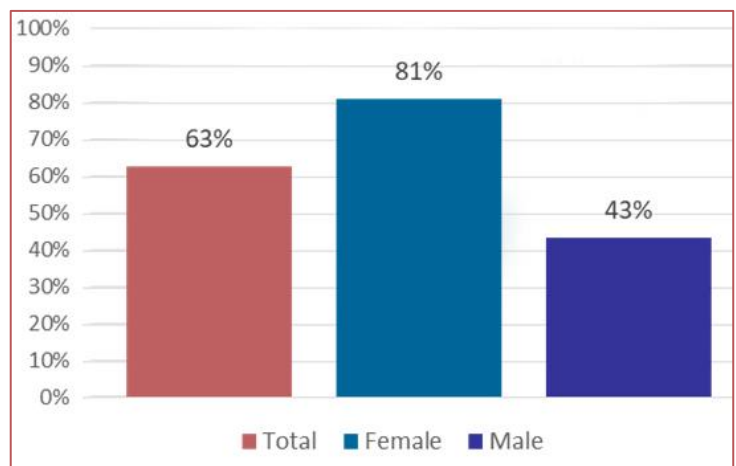
One in two women (49%) and nearly one in five men (18%) were sexually touched in an unwelcome way;

Four in 10 women (40%) and one in five men (21%) experienced cyber sexual harassment;

More than one in four women (27%) and one in 10 men (11%) were physically followed;

One in three women (30%) and around one in 10 men (12%) faced unwanted genital flashing;

Nearly one in four women (23%) and one in 10 men (9%) survived sexual assault.



The most frequently listed location for sexual harassment is a public space.

Women most frequently reported experiencing sexual harassment in a public space like a street, park or store (68% of women), at their workplace or school (38% of women, respectively). Men's most frequently reported locations were a public space (23% of men), their school or own residence (15% of men, respectively).

Most sexual assault takes place in private homes or residences.

For sexual assault, both women and men listed someone else's residence (10% women, 3% men) and their own residence (7% women, 2% men) as the top locations for these acts.

At least one-third of women ages 18-24, Black women, and lesbian or bisexual women reported experiencing sexual harassment in the past six months.

Of those who experienced harassment or assault overall, 18% of women and 16% of men experienced it within the past six months. At least one-third of young women aged 18-24 (32%), Black women (35%), and lesbian or bisexual women (39%) reported sexual harassment in the past six months, the highest prevalence across demographics.

The study and report were produced by UC San Diego Center on Gender Equity and Health, Stop Street Harassment, CALCASA, Promundo and RALIANCE.

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Those who reported sexual harassment alone were most likely to report that a stranger committed it, while those reporting assault as well as harassment were most likely to say that someone close to them was involved in the abuse.

Among the respondents who reported experiencing sexual harassment alone, strangers were by far the most frequently listed type of person who committed the harassment against them (47% of women and 32% of men who reported only sexual harassment). Those with a history of both sexual assault and harassment were significantly more likely than those who experienced sexual harassment alone to report known people as those who committed the assault or harassment.

Sexual harassment and assault cause people, especially women, to feel anxiety or depression and prompt them to change their route or regular routine.

Among those who reported experiencing sexual harassment or assault, 30% of women and 18% of men said they felt anxiety or depression, while 23% of women and 12% of men changed their route or regular routine, and 22% of women and 16% of men ended a relationship (such as a friendship or romantic partnership) on account of these experiences.

Most people who said they committed sexual harassment also said they had experienced sexual harassment.

Among those who reported committing sexual harassment, 95% of women and 73% of men reported experiencing it too. In contrast, among those who reported never having committed sexual harassment, 74% of women and 31% of men reported experiencing it.

While experiences of sexual harassment and assault are highly prevalent, accusations of sexual harassment and assault are very rare.

Despite 81% of women and 43% of men reporting experiencing sexual harassment, only 2% of men and 1% of women said they had been told that they sexually harassed or assaulted someone. Only 1% of those who self-reported that they have never committed sexual harassment or assault said they were told by an individual that they had done so.

Very few people have ever been accused of sexual harassment or assault compared with those who have said they perpetrated it, and especially compared with the many people who said they have experienced it.

By and large, when people say they experienced sexual harassment or assault, they are telling the truth.

Beliefs related to high-profile allegations of sexual harassment and assault are comparable for women and men.

Almost half of women (43%) and men (40%) believed sexual harassment occurred in all or most of the recent high-profile allegations of sexual harassment and assault; only 8% of women and 11% of men believed in most or all cases nothing happened, and the accusers are purposely lying. Half of women and men felt it varied from case to case, with some true and some false.

Find the full report, survey instrument and press release at www.StopStreetHarassment.org.