

STIFLED POTENTIAL:

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION'S
CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIAL INEQUALITY



Enlightened
SOLUTIONS

We are Enlightened Solutions. Our mission is to provide support, advocacy, and education for those affected by Workplace Inequity.

ENLIGHTENED-SOLUTIONS.COM

Report compiled by Bethany Studenic, LSW, MSSA
Managing Director | Enlightened Solutions

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION: THE REALITY

According to a recent study by "Stop Street Harassment" sexual harassment is incredibly prevalent. Almost 3 out of 4 women have experienced some form of sexual harassment during their lives.

At work, studies have found widely varying numbers, in part because none of these studies defines sexual harassment or discrimination the same way.

The Pew Research center reports 1 in 4 women experience harassment at work. While the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission cites research ranging from 20% to 75%

Current research does tell us that this is a widespread problem affecting millions of women and men across our country.

Yet reports remain low. EEOC complaints haven't changed much, even as the workforce has continued to expand.

We know that the most vulnerable people are the ones who are targeted. People of color, individuals with disabilities, and people living in low-income situations are more likely to be abused.

Men who have a disability, and of a different ethnicity or racial group, or who identify as gay or bisexual are more likely to experience harassment and discrimination.

81%

The number of women who experience sexual harassment or sexual assault in their lifetime

43%

The number of men who experience sexual harassment or sexual assault in their lifetime

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH IT?

Right now, most people don't report sexual harassment and discrimination at work.

The most common way of dealing with sexual harassment is to ignore it, avoid the harasser, or endure it without saying anything.

Women are more likely than men to confront a harasser, but both groups struggle to report.

The truth is that most people have experienced some form of harassment or discrimination, but do not report it.

Why is this the case?

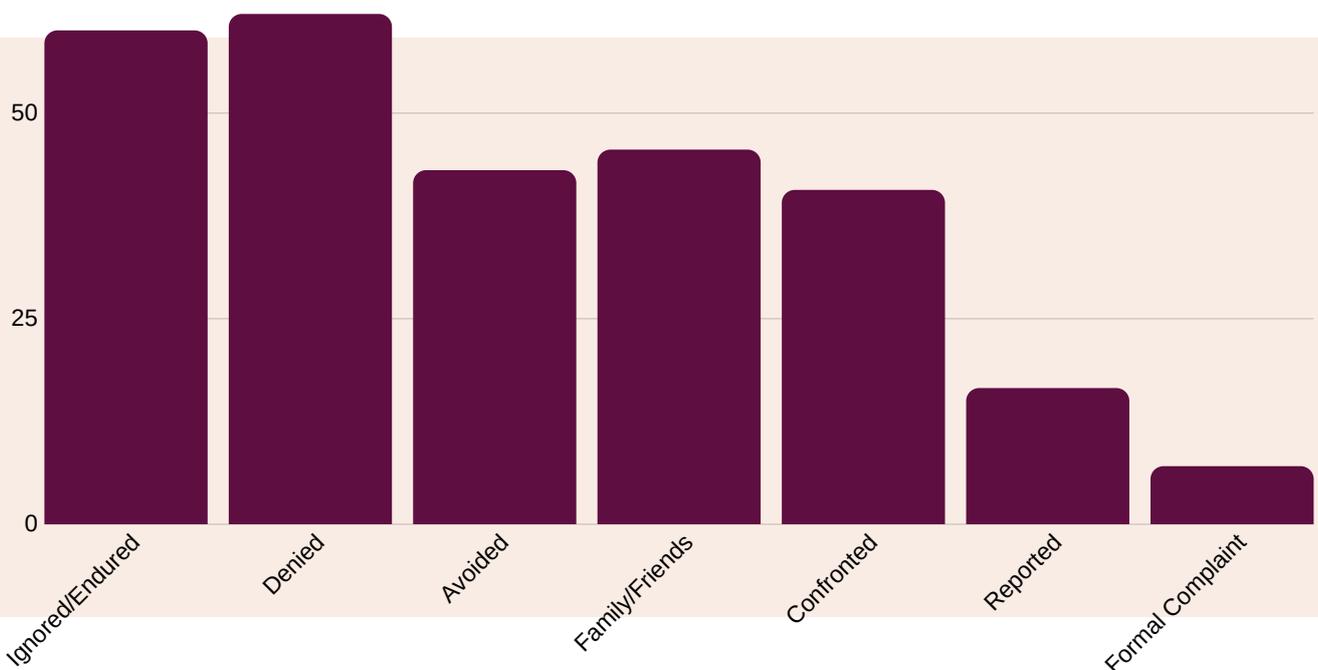
The existing research struggles to pin down what exactly workplace harassment and discrimination is. How do we define it?

The ambiguity of the problem can make it hard for victims to report. Abusers are often careful about the way they harass and discriminate against others. It's never simple.

We also know that being the victim of workplace harassment and discrimination is hard for victims. They often blame themselves, feel humiliated, and deny the problem altogether.

In addition, reporting systems do not inspire confidence. People experience retaliation, and have significant fear about filing a lawsuit against an employer they rely on.

75

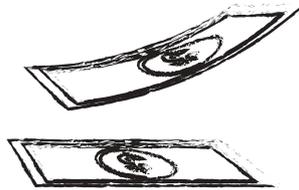


WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Money affects every facet of our lives.

How much money you make affects:

- How long you will live
- What quality of education you will receive
- What jobs will be available to you in the future
- The likelihood of your incarceration
- The types of friendships you are likely to have
- How much free time you have
- The type of person you are likely to marry
- The likelihood of incarceration of your children
- The development and education of your children
- Your children's future career options



It is well established that the same groups that experience harassment and discrimination are the same groups that are paid less. This is not a coincidence. It is very difficult for people of diversity to thrive in an environment that does not fully value their diversity.

In order for people of diversity to fully participate in the workplace, we must be able to hold abusers accountable, identify people in need of training, foster workplaces that empower people of diversity, and offer methods for reporting that are reliable.

This is how people of diversity will be able to fully participate in the workplace and close the wage gap.

\$21

The value of 1 hour of a white man's time.

\$12

The value of 1 hour of a black woman's time.

PAY ME.

DIVERSITY AT WORK

In order to close the wage gap and even the playing field for all, we must have solutions that foster inclusivity. Many diversity initiatives have focused on giving people of diversity the skills they need to thrive at work. There is no amount of training that will equip a person to change others' perceptions of them based on their minority status.

We must shift our focus to making the workplace a place of equality, not on changing the diverse people who should be included.

Historically, diversity initiatives have focused on people of diversity. Recruiting and training people of diversity, finding mentors of diversity. However these initiatives place the burden on people of diversity to fit into a system that does not consider them.

It is time to change the system

Before we can do that, we have to understand the reality of workplace harassment and discrimination.

There is so much that is unknown about workplace equality. The research is limited. We know very little about how harassers choose their targets, what tactics they use, and why victims don't report.

If we don't fully understand the current landscape, we can't recommend long-term solutions.

Enlightened Solutions is conducting ground-breaking research into the nature of workplace discrimination and harassment to generate new and unique solutions to widespread problems.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Help us define abuse.

Our Unmasked series is focusing in on stories of harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Together, we are taking off the masks of workplace harassers and building profiles on the weapons abusers use, the systems that enable them, and how they choose their targets.

Your insight will help us build strategies for spotting abusers, resources for potential targets, and new training for workplace systems.

