

Bullying 'follows' LGB people from school to work

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Around one in three lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals who are bullied at school will have similar experiences in the workplace later in life, according to new research by Anglia Ruskin University.

The study, published in the *Manchester School* journal, approached 400 LGB individuals retrospectively about their experience at school, and also asked them about bullying at their current workplace.

It found that 35.2% of gay/bisexual men who had experienced frequent school-age bullying experience frequent workplace bullying. Among lesbian women, the figure was 29%.

When describing their [experiences](#) at school, 73% of gay men said they were either constantly, frequently or sometimes bullied. Just 9.9% said they were never bullied. Among lesbian women, 59% experienced constant, frequent, or occasional bullying. The mean age of participants was 37, meaning their school years would have been approximately between 1985 and 1997.

The research also examines job satisfaction. Most gay men said they were "dissatisfied" with their job (56%), while this was also the most common answer for [lesbian women](#) (47%).

Author Dr. Nick Drydakis, of Anglia Ruskin University, said: "This study suggests that bullying may be a chronic problem for LGB individuals, which continues from school to the workplace.

"This could be for a number of reasons—school-age bullying could be more likely to lead to low self-esteem, a difficulty in forming trusting relationships, or a greater risk of poor mental health. Factors like these may make it more likely they will experience bullying in the workplace later in life.

"Post [school](#)-age bullying victims might exhibit characteristics of vulnerability, such as sub-assertive behaviours, which make them attractive targets for unfavourable treatments and evaluations from colleagues and employers in the workplace.

"In turn, individuals, firms and society as a whole face long-lasting negative effects which appear to begin in the playground.

"There is also a negative association between bullying of LGB individuals, and job satisfaction. Interestingly, we found that the existence of a [workplace](#) group for LGB [individuals](#) appeared to result in better [job satisfaction](#), perhaps a lesson for employers wanting a more satisfied and motivated workforce."

The study's patterns are in line with a 2018 Government Equalities Office survey finding that at least 40% of LGBT respondents had experienced a verbal harassment or physical violence between 2016 and 2017.

More information: Nick Drydakis, School-Age Bullying, Workplace Bullying and Job Satisfaction: Experiences of LGB People in Britain, *The Manchester School* (2018). [DOI: 10.1111/manc.12257](https://doi.org/10.1111/manc.12257)

Provided by Anglia Ruskin University

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