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Exploring Perceptions of Workplace Bullying in Nursing

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Background

- ❖ Bullying is experienced by all levels of nurses and in all practice settings. The numbers are slightly lower than the general working population where 35% report experiences of bullying. (Workplace Bullying Institute, 2010)
- ❖ A recent ANA survey of 3,765 registered nurses and nursing students, revealed 43% of respondents had been verbally and/or physically threatened by a patient or family member. Additionally, 24% of respondents have been physically assaulted by a patient or family member of a patient while at work (ANA & LCWA Research Group, 2014).
- ❖ A study of student nurses reported that 53% had been put down by a staff nurse (Longo, 2007).
- ❖ Sa and Fleming (2008) found one in six nurses (13%) reported being bullied in the past six months.
- ❖ Data collected from 511 newly licensed registered nurses revealed 31% of respondents reported bullying within the previous six months. (Simons, 2008)
- ❖ Johnson & Rea (2009) found most of the respondents reported being bullied by the charge nurse, manager, or director.
- ❖ Bullying has also been linked to high rates of nurse turnover (Simon, 2008) and intent to leave one's current position (Johnson & Rea, 2009; Simons, 2008).
- ❖ Using the Negative Acts Questionnaire, Etienne (2014) reported 48% of nurse respondents acknowledged being bullied in the workplace in the previous 6 months.

Purpose

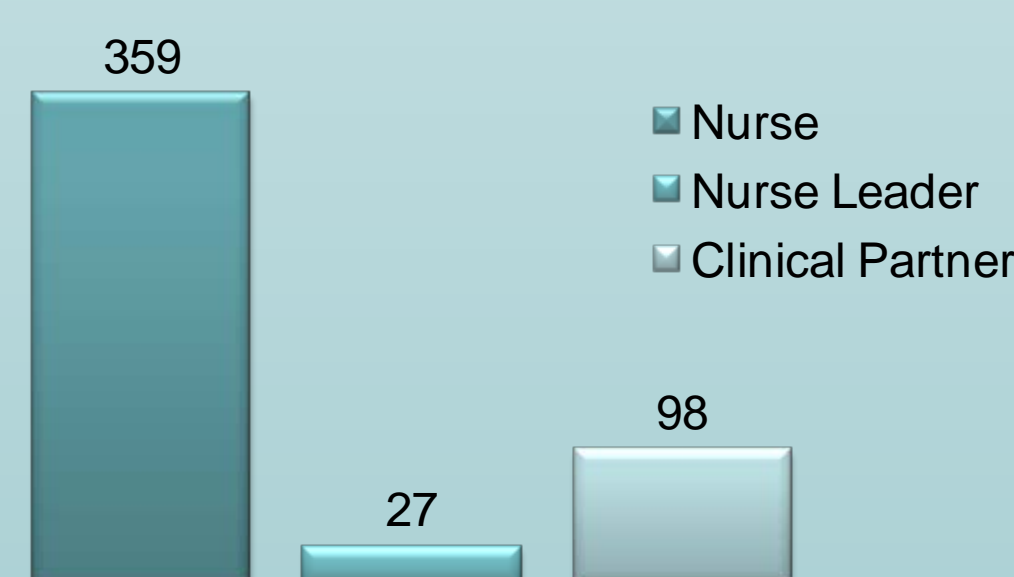
- ❖ To identify registered nurse/clinical partner perceptions of the frequency, intensity and prevalence of bullying in the workplace.
- ❖ To assess registered nurses' experiences of bullying by physicians, coworkers, patients and direct supervisors.

Methodology

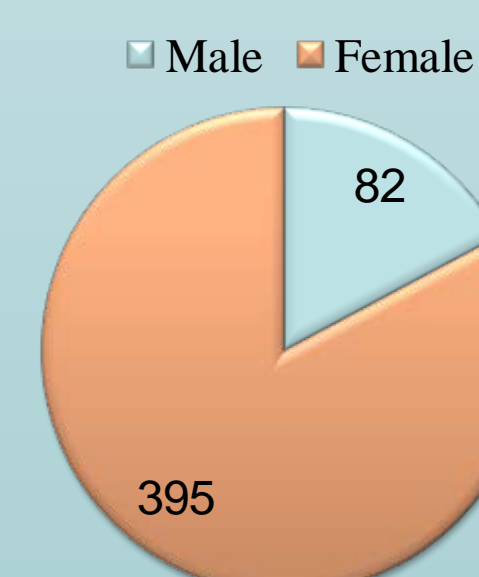
- ❖ Study design: Descriptive Cross Sectional Survey
- ❖ Inclusion criteria: RNs and Clinical Partners working at Baptist Hospital of Miami
- ❖ IRB approval was obtained for Exempt status
- ❖ RNs were offered two surveys, the Nursing Incivility Scale (NIS) and the Negative Acts Questionnaire (NQA). Clinical Partners were offered the NQA only.
- ❖ The NIS developed by Guidroz, Burnfield-Geimer, Clark, Schwetschenau, and Jex (2010) is a 43 item questionnaire divided into five sources of incivility (General, Nurse, Supervisor, Physician, and Patient). Participants were asked how much they agree with each statement on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). All subscales revealed acceptable reliability and validity with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .81 to .94.
- ❖ The NQA developed by Einarsen et al (2009), consists of 22 items and was developed for measuring perceived exposure to bullying in the workplace. Reliability and validity is high with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .87 to .93.

Results

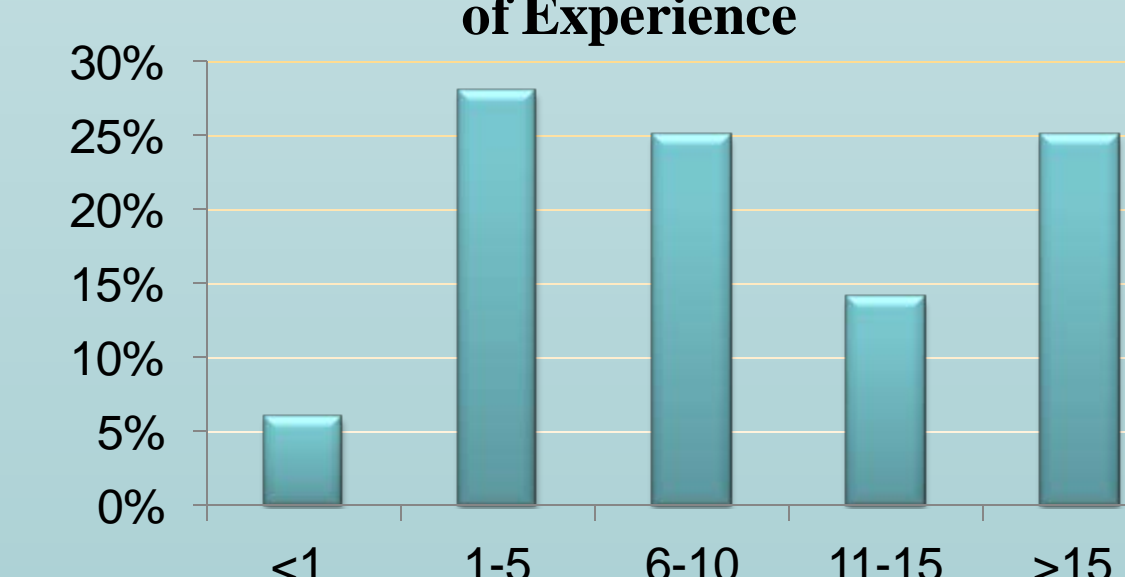
Number of Participants by Role



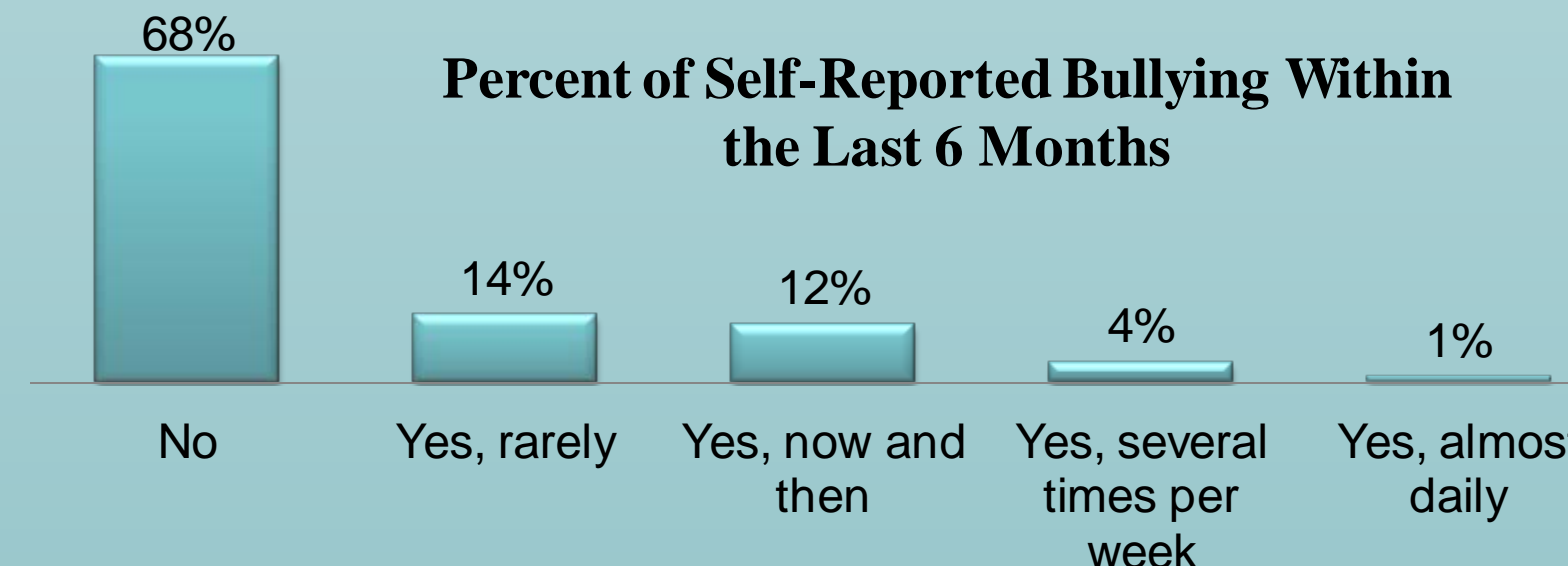
Gender



Number of Years of Experience



Percent of Self-Reported Bullying Within the Last 6 Months



Nurse Incivility Scale
Number 1 Concept Per Source
Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)

Source of Incivility	Subscale	Mean (SD)
General	Don't stick to appropriate noise level	3.2 (1.24)
Nurse	Nurses gossip about one another	3.1 (1.32)
Supervisor	Factors gossip and personal information into personal decisions.	1.74 (1.06)
Physician	Some are verbally abusive.	2.95 (1.28)
Patient	Take out frustrations on nurse	3.24 (1.35)

The Top Four Negative Acts Experienced by Respondents

Negative Act	Now and Then or Monthly (%)	Weekly or Daily (%)
Exposed to unmanageable workload	26.6	10.9
Withholding information that affects your performance	26	6
Having your opinions and views ignored	26.8	5.2
Ordered to do work below your level of competence	22.1	9.4

Discussion

- ❖ The results of this study support the literature suggesting bullying of nurses continues to be present in the workplace.
- ❖ The negative act chosen most often by respondents was 'exposed to unmanageable workload' (37.5%).
- ❖ Findings from the NIS reveal patients and visitors taking out frustrations on the nurse was the most frequently reported source of bullying, consistent with ANA's survey (2014).
- ❖ Respondents rated supervisors and managers as the most infrequent source of bullying which is in contrast to studies identify supervisors and managers as the most common source of bullying (Johnson & Rae, 2009; Carter, et al. 2013; Etienne, 2014).
- ❖ Overall, 68% of respondents reported no bullying within the last six months. However 5% did experience bullying on a regular basis.
- ❖ While there was a response rate of 37%, the remaining 63% of nurses/clinical partners who were eligible did not participate resulting in a limitation to the study. This may have been a result of the sensitive nature of the topic.

Implications for Nursing

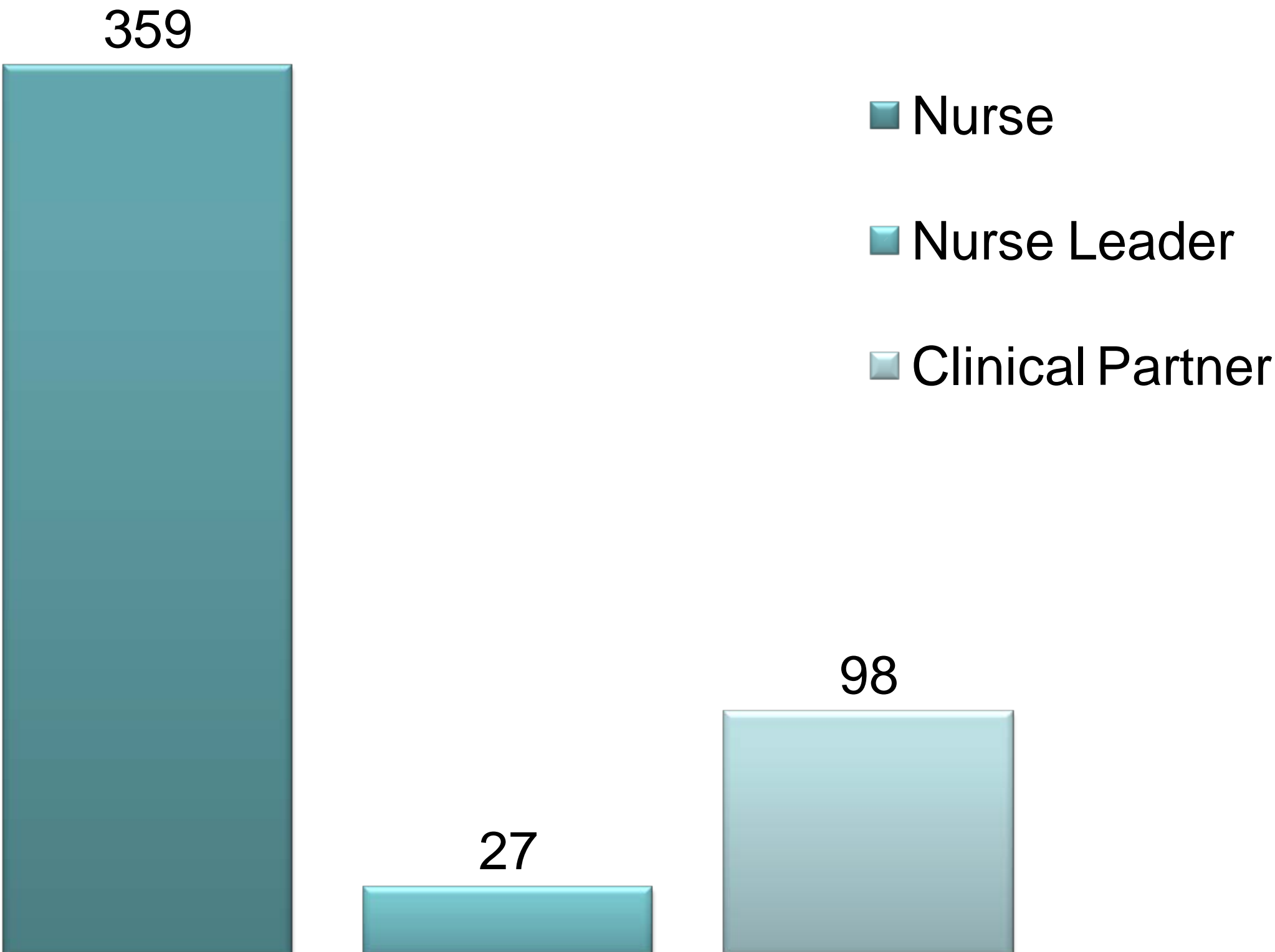
- ❖ The findings from this study support the need for an organizational action plan designed to eliminate bullying in the work place.
- ❖ Components of the action plan should include: (1) Educational programs on what is and how to identify incivility and bullying in the workplace. (2) Bullying prevention programs. (3) Creating a culture of respect. (4) Development of a zero tolerance policy.

Acknowledgements

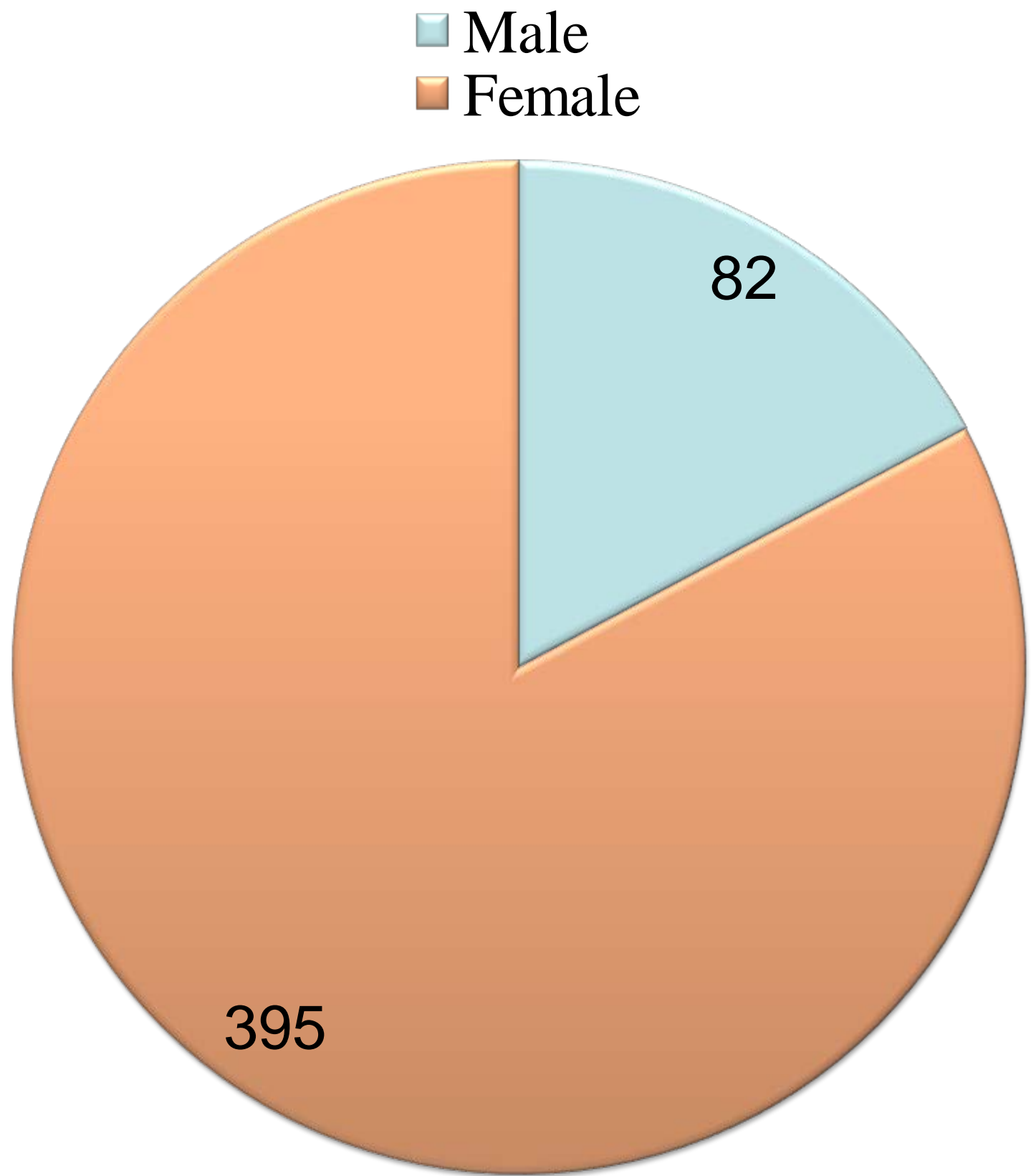
Special thank you to the research team that made this study possible. Alicia Robbins, Bridget Webster, Delores Eachus, Diane Kramer, Freddy Auguste, Jan Roy, Karen Sperling, Laura Carey, Maria Bruce, Mary Freeman, Sandra Castano, Sonja Hunt, Suzi Spoerl, and Terry Delgado.

Results

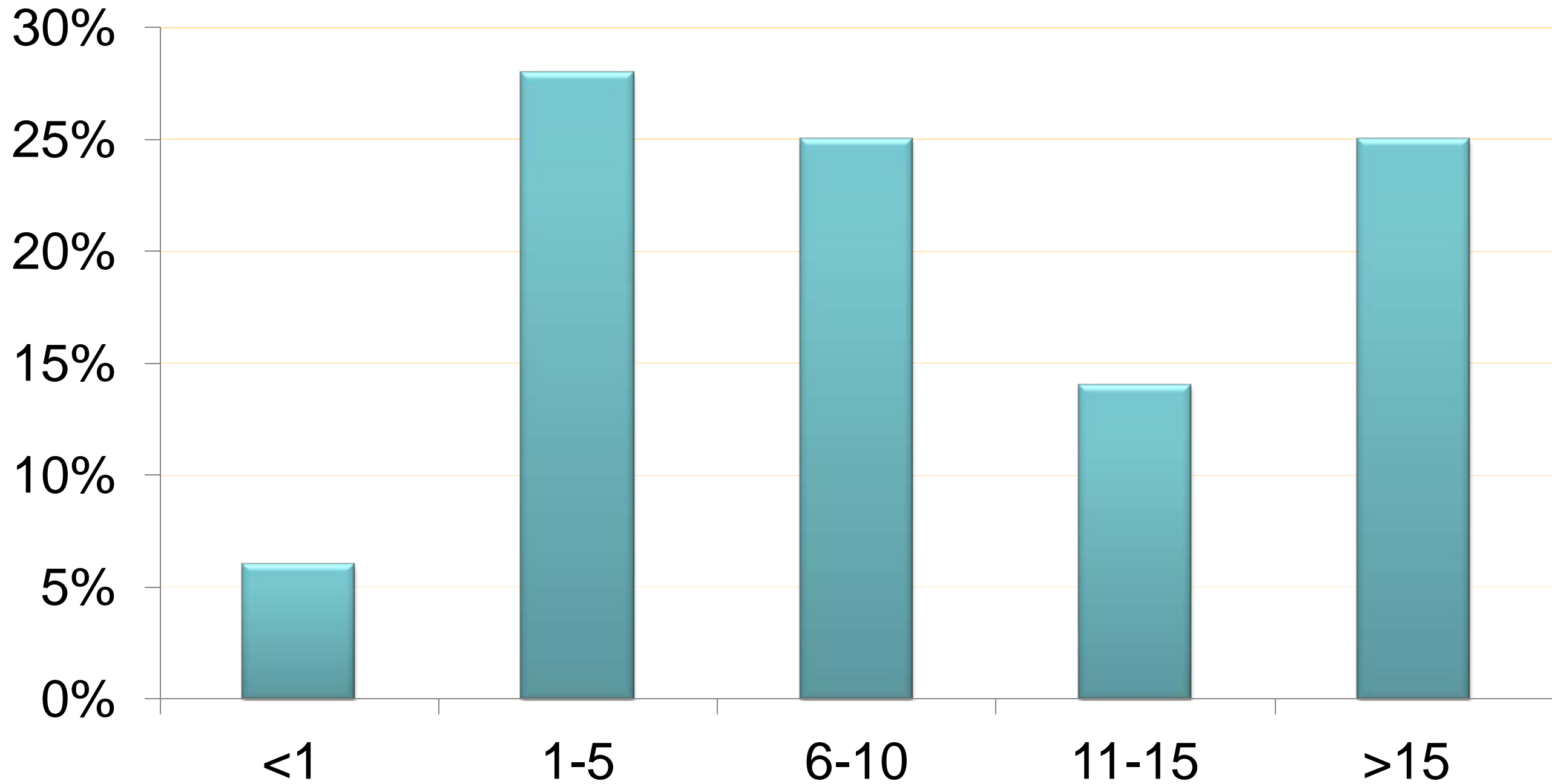
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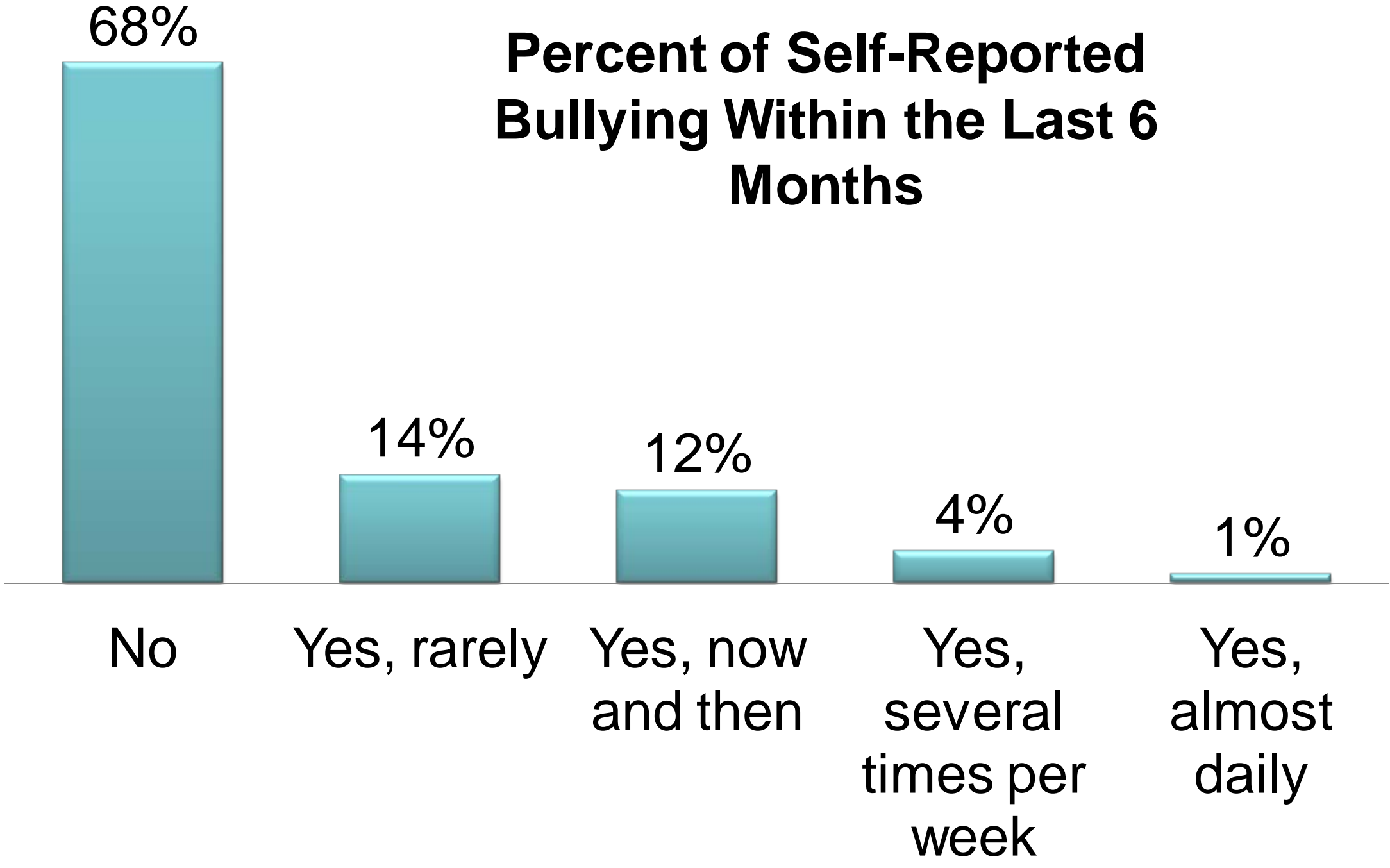
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