To what extent is Bullying and Harassment

Present within the Student Placement Workplace?

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Executive Summary

This paper aims to investigate the extent of bullying and harassment within the year long student placement workplace. It will investigate the protocols of the human resource practices and legislations with regards to bullying and harassment.

Human Resource management is a key aspect of understanding bullying and harassment within the workplace, but it is unclear whether the legislations are put into place and abided by in order to ensure the happy and friendly environment to which all staff in any workplace are entitled. It is essential that this research proves whether or not these students were disparaged by other members of staff and if the students who were subject to unpleasantness ultimately left their placement.

'Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect at work. Bullying and Harassment of any kind are in no-one's interest and should not be tolerated in the workplace' (ACAS, 2011)

The literature review begins by discussing bullying and harassment and how there is not one clear definition of it, as well as the different forms in which it can occur, as cited in Tehrani (2001). It then goes on to discuss the possibility of bullying and harassment being institutionalized and that these forms of abuse are handed down from one generation of workers to the next. Human Resource Practices and Legislation are both a key focus of the literature, with particular interest being given to ACAS and Employment Legislation as well as what an internship offer university students.

The paper gathers information through the implementation of semi-structured interviews which consist of 14 questions, to 17 volunteers. The questions included in the interviews were based upon previous research on the topic as well as current literature available about workplace bullying and harassment. Significant differences emerged between a number of students' placements, some witnessing bullying and harassment whereas others were unaware of it occurring within their workplace.

The paper concluded that bullying and harassment is apparent within students' placement experiences and some human resource departments were often regarded as ineffective in relation to support networks. Although these conclusions are helpful in determining that bullying and harassment is still present within the student placement workplace, further research is required in order to establish how much information is actually given to students at the start of their placement in connection with bullying and harassment policies. It is thought that although human resource departments have many legislative procedures which must be abided by regarding bullying and harassment, staff cannot be forced to complain, therefore meaning bullies are not made accountable for their actions.

Please note that for the purpose of this paper, a student's placement will also be referred to as an internship.

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1.0 Context

Confidentially plays a key role in this research project. Due to the delicate nature of this topic, it is essential that no names of the person in question or the organisation are released, thus maintaining their anonymity.

The main integrity of this research is to establish whether or not placement students within the hospitality industry are subject to bullying and harassment during their placement year and if so, how was the situation dealt with or resolved by their Human Resource Department.

From the research undertaken, it is clear that there are still widespread occurrences of bullying and harassment in all industries. However, for the purpose of this study, the author chose to focus attention on the hospitality industry and students on their placement year. Previous studies on bullying and harassment have shown that often these cases go un-noticed by senior members or staff for quite some time which ultimately resulted in members of staff resigning. Although this study did not come into contact with anyone who had to resign due to difficulties, a number of interviewees were aware of someone within their place of work who did, due to either a harasser or bully making their working life intolerable.

From research and interviews undertaken it is clear that all members of staff should be made fully aware of the Human Resource practices concerning bullying and harassment at the start of their employment. Although this would not prevent bullying and harassment occurring, it would however, ensure that all staff are fully aware of the protocols of this often overlooked but serious issue.

The primary aim is to establish if hospitality students are subject to bullying and harassment whilst on their placement, and whether or not they felt they had someone who they could speak to about their situation. This will be done by conducting sixteen semi-structured interviews of students with diverse experiences and assessing the results, whilst being able to compare and contrast different students' placement situations.

The objectives of the author are to establish a conclusion through the analysis of the interviews, whilst trying to assess the human resource practices and analyse whether the placement students felt that their human resource department was useful to them. Before deciding upon the objectives of the research it is vital for the author to compose a review of the contemporary literature, as well as any data which may relate to this study in some way

2.0 - Section 1: Literature

2.1 Bullying Practices

The initial research section and literature content aims to establish the outcome of the theoretical framework in relation to current laws and human resource practices with bullying as the theoretical underpinning. Through investigation of the current literature, it will become possible to understand firstly, why bullying occurs in the workplace and secondly, the difficult situations in which hospitality students are placed.

2.2 Definition Framework of Bullying

'Research has established that there is no clear or agreed definition of bullying showing considerable disparity, thus making it rather difficult to determine and evaluate what constitutes as bullying' (Randall, 1996, p.14), although understandings are converging. As a broadened definition, Whitmore and Kleiner (1999, p 12) believe bullying or workplace violence constitutes as *"verbal, physical and threatening behaviour, manifesting itself in both physical and psychological responses."* These specific acts of bullying and their definitions can be seen in table 1 (see appendix 7.1.1). This table clearly demonstrates five different types of bullying, a definition for each type and what in particular causes it. This research is not sector orientated and established that violence is indeed prevalent in all working environments. Therefore, what is often seen as bullying within an office environment could be perceived as something entirely different within the service sector. According to ACAS (2011) as many as 18.9 million working days a year are lost because of bullying. These statistics unveil the shocking reality of how prevalent bullying currently is within all industries.

The focal part of the research to date shows that there is a very fine line between what one individual may interpret as bullying or harassment and what another may interpret as motivational. Table 2 (see appendix 7.1.2) shows that a number of researchers have found bullying to have a number of different definitions. Although both Hannabuss (1998, p308) and Oade (2009, p12) both imply that bullying is emotionally and psychologically punishing, there is a conflict as to why the bullying occurs. Oade (2009, p12) believes it occurs when the bully is trying to remove power from the other colleague, whereas Hannabus (1998, p309) implies that bullying occurs due to a variety of personal factors such as childhood, culture and politics of the victim.

Tehrani (2004, p121) presents the notion of 'Motivator' or 'Menace' to identify whether the manager is in actual fact motivating the individual or causing psychological harm. Table 3 which can be seen in appendix 7.1.3, gives a clear and sector relevant overview of how to distinguish between motivational tactics and bullying. Some scholars believe motivation can often be seen by employees as bullying, depending upon the situation. However, an institutionalised example of a menace and a motivator is the verbal and physical abuse which employees sometimes receive from chefs. A comparative example of this can be seen in table 4 (see appendix 7.1.4). Within the collaborative work, *'Building a Culture of Respect'* (Tehrani, 2001, p13), Hoel and Cooper recognised that perhaps bullying is becoming institutionalised and 'handed down from one generation of workers to the next.'

The example of bullying in the hospitality industry which can be seen in table 4 (see appendix 7.1.4), could be very similar to what is happening to students during their placement years, which is why it is essential that this research is undertaken. Table 4 also gives a comparative example of institutionalised bullying within the civil service to enable the author to identify that bullying is not only apparent in the Hospitality Industry.

In summary, the chosen framework has established that bullying and harassment does not have one clear definition; however the idea of bullying and harassment within the workplace is well established. *'The effects of bullying and maltreatments as defined in the literature are rife within the hospitality industry and have become a wide scale and controversial issue resulting in a taboo in organisational life'* (Murray-Gibbons and Gibbons 2007, p34). After extensive reading it is clear that although organisations may find it difficult to implement the legislations on bullying and harassment, it would be highly advisable that they do, due to the fines they might incur if arbitration has found that these situations are not correctly dealt with.

2.3 Current Human Resource Practices

Extensive research into Human Resource practices to eliminate bullying and harassment in the workplace has been undertaken. There are numerous relevant human resource practices for tackling bullying and harassment, but there is evidence of great disparity on how effectively they deal with such issues, thus the gap in the research. The research suggests that such practices are not followed as closely in the hospitality industry, especially in direct correlation to the kitchen example, which can be seen in table 4 (see appendix 7.1.4).

'Previous research acknowledges a gap in the literature with applied human resource strategies proving inconclusive' (Lee-Ross 2002, p 578). The issues studied by Lee-Ross (2002, p579) are not limited solely to UK workplaces, and suggest opportunities and techniques in bullying in workplaces in other countries.

ACAS (the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) is an independent organisation which aims to prevent and resolve employment disputes, including bullying. It runs courses to help HR professionals deal with bullying and harassment at work and has published an advice leaflet entitled Bullying and Harassment at Work. The leaflet provides employees with basic information about bullying and harassment and details the responsibilities of employers and advises on what a bullied employee can do. ACAS has developed a web site devoted to preventing and resolving employment disputes; this is accessible to both employers and employees. Although the website does include aspects of legislation it is more a guideline to be followed in any cases of bullying and harassment, along with possible preventative measures. It is believed that if these guidelines are met, the likelihood of bullying occurring is reduced.

Extensive research within the current literature, suggests that there appears to be no applied framework for protocols resolving bullying in the hospitality industry and the connection all staff should have with the human resource department. Key texts, such as '*Supervision in the Hospitality Industry-Applied Human Resources'* and the '*International Journal of Hospitality Management,'* contain little hospitality specific literature. The author believes that this is understandable as the research topic is notably too much of an intangible subject matter to attain firm research conclusions.

2.4 Legislation

According to Paz (2010), *'there is no current legislation that deals specifically with bullying'.* However, employees may be able to bring a claim in an employment tribunal using discrimination legislation and, in particular, provision relating to harassment. However, according to ACAS (2011), *'it is not possible to make a direct complaint to an Employment Tribunal about bullying, as it is not related to a protected characteristic*'. These protected characteristics, relate to nine discriminative issues, which do not include bullying.

Despite industry guidance and tribunal legislations, it appears that bullying in the hospitality industry can go on for months or in some cases even years, oblivious to everyone but the victim. The current literature will enable this author to draw more firm conclusions as to why bullying and harassment of hospitality students occurs, when the only reason they are on placement is to learn about the industry and gain a wealth of experience.

Employment legislation is changing at a rapid rate. Embley (2006), partner in the employment group, Pinsent Mason, has identified that there has been '*much over the past five years done to ensure employees have improved working environments.'* Examples of these are, the introduction of the Protection from Harassment Act (1997), the Employment Act (2002) and dispute resolution reforms (personneltoday.com, 2006). Embley's discussion establishes that perhaps if these current laws were made more widespread and widely known, there would be less ambiguity with what exactly is classified as bullying and harassment. This research identifies the already arisen issues found by the author regarding defining bullying and harassment.

Further research has established that in looking at the current legislation in detail, *"there is no specific legislation on bullying"* (Pratt, 2006). The culture of an organisation has to change so that there is zero tolerance towards bullying. It is thought that the appropriate place for dealing with bullying and harassment is in the workplace where complaints can be made without fear of prejudice, knowing that they are going to be dealt with fairly. This in turn will of course prevent situations becoming unpleasant and getting out of hand. To achieve this, an employer must encourage employees to speak out about their situations. However, a hostile environment would prevent this occurring. Employers have a duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) to ensure health, safety and welfare of their employees. It is this legislation that covers most, if not all cases of bullying and harassment. If this legislation is not abided by, the employer is breaching an individual's contract of employment, thus breaking the law.

2.5 Bullying Within the Hospitality Industry

Although bullying within the Hospitality Industry is not often represented in the media today, it is still a contributing and longstanding factor to the working environment of employees. '*According to recent reports, the recession has led to a rise in such behaviour, caused by increased pressure at work and longer working hours'* (Paz 2010). Although there have been a number of recent reports on bullying and harassment within the working environment there have been no case studies conducted for over 10 years. The most recent case study which has been obtained is that conducted by Lucy McMahon in 2000, who constructed a questionnaire in order to gain qualitative and quantitative data about bullying in two specific Irish Hotels, results of which can be seen in table 5 below

Table 5– Summary of Comparative Hospitality Case Study Findings

Factor	Dublin hotel	Belfast hotel
1. Policy statement	Yes, but only anti-sexual harassment	Yes, but only anti-sectarian harassment
2. Employee awareness of policy	60 per cent did not know of policy 10 per cent thought that the hotel "probably do" have a policy	60 per cent did not know of policy
3. Incidences of harassment as per personnel manager	One formal complaint of sexual harassment	No formal complaints of harassment. One informal report of harassment
4. Incidences of harassment as per employees	Three employees interviewed gave stories of harassment, one of which dealt with harassment from customers in the bar of the hotel	Three employees interviewed gave accounts of minor incidents but overall all interviewed thought that there was a very good working atmosphere
5. Training issues	90 per cent of employees had received no formal training. Of these, 66 per cent would like to receive training in the area	No employees received training in this area, a situation admitted by the personnel manager

Source – McMahon (2000, p386)

From the table above it is clear that there are a number of issues concerning the findings of this case study. No formal training was given to 90% of employees at the Dublin hotel and no employees at the Belfast hotel received training of any sort in this area. If this training had been implemented there is a high possibility that the incidences of harassment would not have occurred as all employees at each hotel would be fully aware of the policies towards bullying and harassment.

2.6 Hospitality Internships /placements

It is common practice for many students who are a part of global hospitality education to undertake a year long internship in their chosen industry. This period away from university helps them to understand the connection between their course and how it relates to their possible future career. The experience of an internship in the hospitality industry enables students to improve their professional and technical skills, gives them competitive advantage at graduate job interviews over other candidates, as well as being able to develop their personal skills such as teamwork, project management and presenting.

Although Hospitality internships are often a very positive element of a student's development at university, the students are often put under huge pressures from their employers as well as sneered at by some employees. It is believed that employees judge Hospitality Internship students for a number of reasons, possibly because of the valuable opportunities the student has been given and/or that the employee is finding it difficult to accept someone new into their working environment. An example of this which the author can describe, is that of a Hospitality student who went to work in a four star hotel in the Republic of Ireland for a year, and commenced an internship as a Duty Manager. Although the student described the experience as invaluable, there were some serious issues which had to be overcome. The main issue was one of jealousy from existing members of staff who struggled to accept that a Hospitality Internship Student had a higher authority in the hotel than they did.

2.7 Summary

The research of legislation and human resource practices has proved illuminating. Not only are there no specific applied human resource operations regarding the matter of bullying, there is also no sound legislation formulated, as it is deemed up to the company or business proprietor's discretion. Thus, the concluding argument of this has to be that every single organisation is required to create their own protocols within their human resource department, both regarding the law and employee protection. It is up to employers to decipher their bullying and harassment framework then let employees know their rights on the matter. The evidence of this having been done is inconclusive and unapparent and can only be determined through research of individual human resource departments. As a result, the following research will allow hospitality students to give their own personal view on their experiences of bullying and harassment, and if any protection and/or advice was offered or was readily available to them from the Human Resource department should they have required it.

3.0 - Section 2: Methodology and Research Methods

3.1 Section Introduction

The author of this report has had personal experiences of bullying and harassment of students in the Hospitality Industry and feels that there is room for research on this topic. Previous studies on bullying and harassment have been conducted, however, important questions about the working atmosphere for Hospitality Interns remain. The investigation will concentrate specifically on Sheffield Hallam University students, with the data being provided by sixteen students who have spent time on a working Hospitality placement. It is felt that the interviewees would be more willing to provide information if they are no longer associated with the hospitality organisation in which they spent their placement.

3.2 Methodology

In order for the author to be able to complete this study, it was essential that the research methods were concise and so produced the results needed enabling the set question to be answered. In addition, qualitative information must be obtained from the research method in order to produce the qualitative data needed to answer the report's question. As the interviewees all spent their placements in different organisations, the data produced will be difficult to both analyse and draw definite conclusions from, as all organisations have different policies when dealing with bullying and harassment.

When choosing the research strategy it was essential to consider the sensitive nature of the topic, and produce a strategy that would not be seen as being too intrusive on those students being interviewed.

In order for the author to be able to produce effective qualitative results it was vital that a semi-structured interview was developed to meet the author's needs. Fourteen questions will be produced by the author and then subsequently divided into three consecutive sections. The sections are detailed below in table 6.

Table 6 – Sections of Questionnaire

Section	Questions
Process	Questions 1-2
Observation	Questions 3-6
Experience	Questions 7-14

Using semi-structured interviews allows a formative set of questions to be complied before the interview takes place, meaning that each interview will follow a similar structure, subject to change depending upon answers to the opening questions. If in a particular case a question needs to be developed or extended upon in order to help facilitate the investigation, using semi structured interviews allows this flexibility to be taken advantage of. Unlike the questionnaire framework, where detailed questions are formulated before hand, semi-structured interviewing starts with more general questions about the topic, with more specific questions subsequently asked.

There are a number benefits in using semi-structured interview methods; the main benefit being that they are less intrusive to those being interviewed as they encourage two-way communication and often make it easier and more comfortable for interviewees to talk more openly about sensitive issues. Semi-structured interviews also provide a

greater amount of qualitative data when compared to questionnaires. Although this is often seen as being difficult to analyse, it will be more effective in gathering the information required to answer the project question.

3.3 Arranging the Practicalities

The first approach the author had to take to be able to conduct this research was to send out a blanket email (See appendix 7.2) to all hospitality students at Sheffield Hallam University via a subject module asking if there would be anyone willing to participate in the research. The first seventeen students who replied within the allotted timings were then subsequently personally contacted, and appointments were made in order to undertake the semi-structured interview.

The research has followed the Research Ethics Guide by Sheffield Hallam University (2010); informed consent was obtained from the interviewee and they were given information to allow them to decide whether they wished to take part or not, also being able to withdraw themselves or their findings at any time from the research.

All the data collected in the interview has conformed to legislation relating to data protection and the opinions of the interviewee will remain confidential and anonymous throughout this report due to the sensitivity of this topic.

3.4 Summary

In conclusion, all the potential research methods have been investigated, allowing for the most suitable to be deployed. Although quantitative research is a precise way to record and analyse data, it is clearly not of relevance for the following investigation. The semi-structured interview which can be seen in appendix 7.4, is an ideal tool as a method of research for this study. It is proposed that the stated methodology will indeed allow for an academic and quality piece of study to be undertaken.
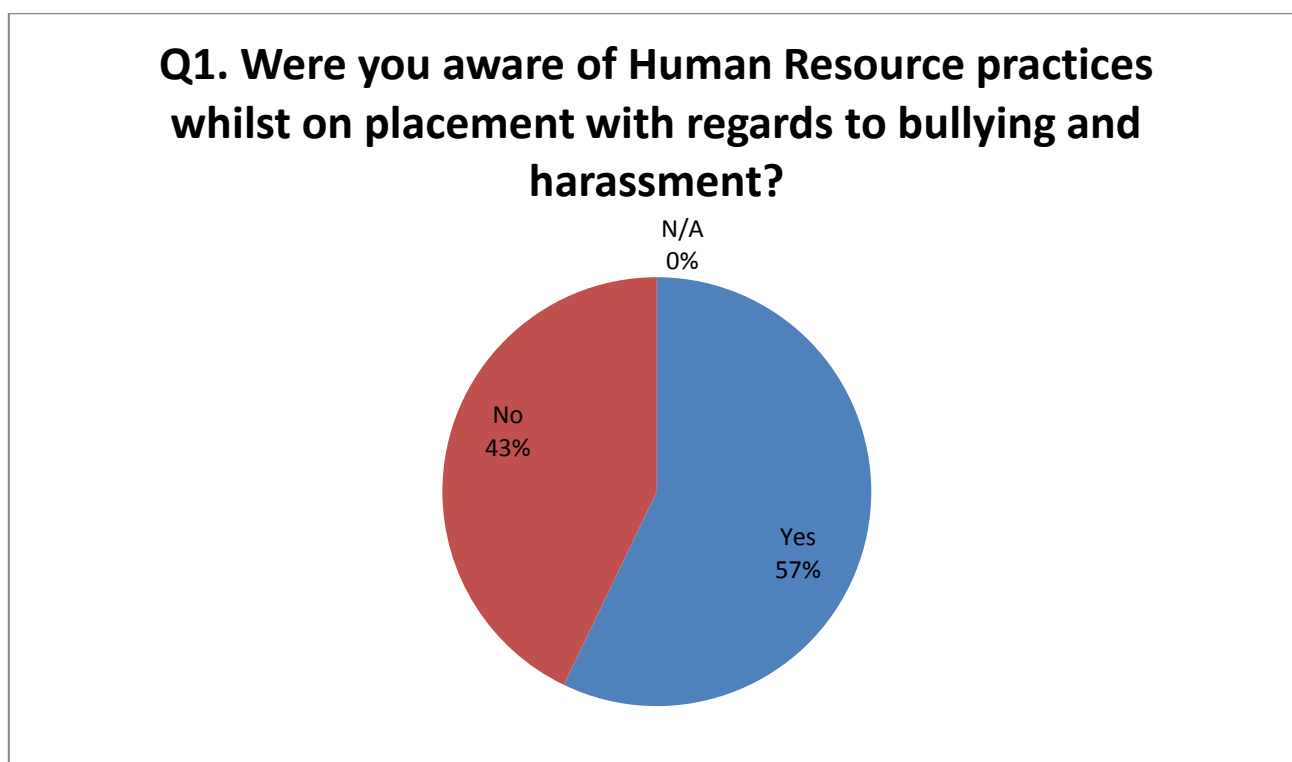
4.0 – Section 3 Findings & Analysis

4.1 Section Introduction

The semi-structured interviews revealed that over half of the interviewees were aware of some sort of bullying and harassment within their place of work whilst on placement. However, only 33% of these interviewees felt that they were actually subject to bullying and harassment themselves.

Out of the 17 semi-structured interviews conducted, one was deemed to be invalid due to the nature of the response received. The student seemed un-interested in the topic and seemed to have no real understanding at all of both bullying and harassment as a whole, as well as holding back on far too many details about any issues of bullying and harassment within their student placement experience. Although the semi-structured interview which was produced contained 14 questions, all students interviewed were very wary about going into any detail with regards to their own personal experiences of bullying. Whether this was because they felt uncomfortable talking about an unpleasant period of time on their placement remains unclear. However, one student did explain that they were unable to elaborate on their experience as the investigation of the bullying claims are still ongoing and so for legal reasons was unable to give out any information.

4.2 Findings

Chart 1 – Question 1

Q1. Were you aware of Human Resource practices whilst on placement with regards to bullying and harassment?

N/A 0%
No 43%
Yes 57%

In comparison to the case study undertaken by Lucy McMahon (2000, p387)which can be seen in table 5; although these result do show that just over 40% of students were unaware of the Human Resource practices, this is similar to the results from both the Dublin and Belfast hotels shown by McMahon (2000). It is clear from both this research as well as McMahon's research that all staff need to be given clear guidelines of the Human Resource practices during their training and induction enabling them to understand the protocol of what to do with regards to bullying and harassment.

Chart 2 – Question 2

Q2. Do you understand the differences between bullying and harassment?

N/A
0%

Yes
36%

No
64%
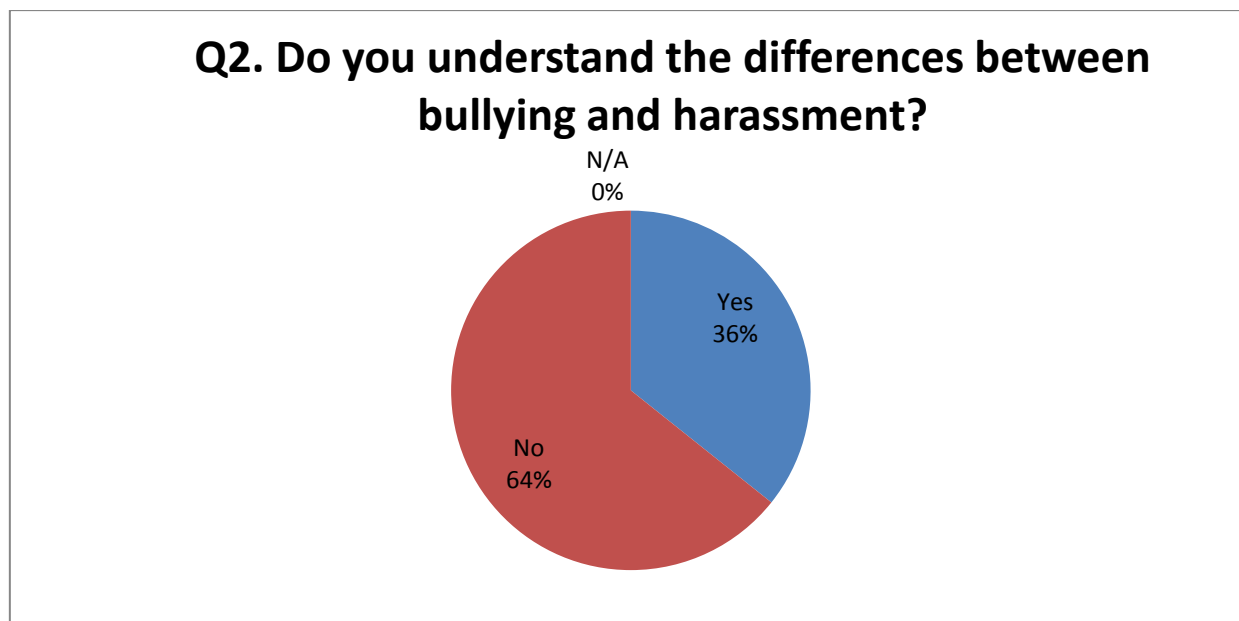
As referred to in the literature, there are many authors who all define bullying differently, which can be seen in table 2 (see appendix 7.1.2). The results from question 2 indicate that over half of the interviewees in question did not fully understand the differences between bullying and harassment. This could be due to them not having any personal issues with bullying and harassment or that they just believed the two to be very similar and therefore had no real understanding of the differences between the two.

Chart 3 – Question 3

Q3. Did you have someone at work who you could confidentially talk to, whether this be another member of staff or your line manager, concering any queries or worries you had?

N/A
0%

No
43%

Yes
57%
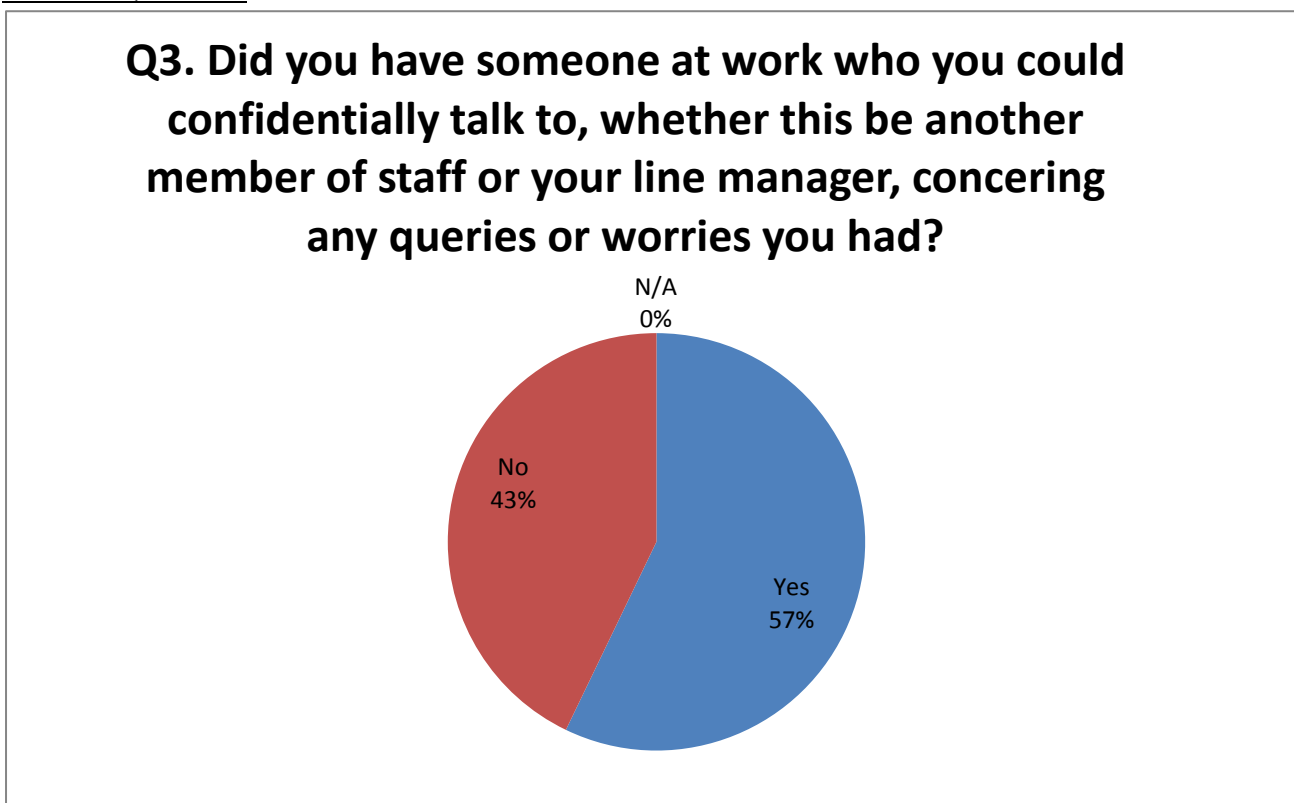
Many placement students often find it very difficult to find someone who they can confide in whilst out on their placements. However, these results clearly show that over half of the sixteen students interviewed, were fortunate to have someone who they could confide in concerning any queries or worries they may have had.

Chart 4 – Question 4

Q4. Were you aware of any cases of bullying in your place of work?

N/A
0%

No
36%

Yes
64%
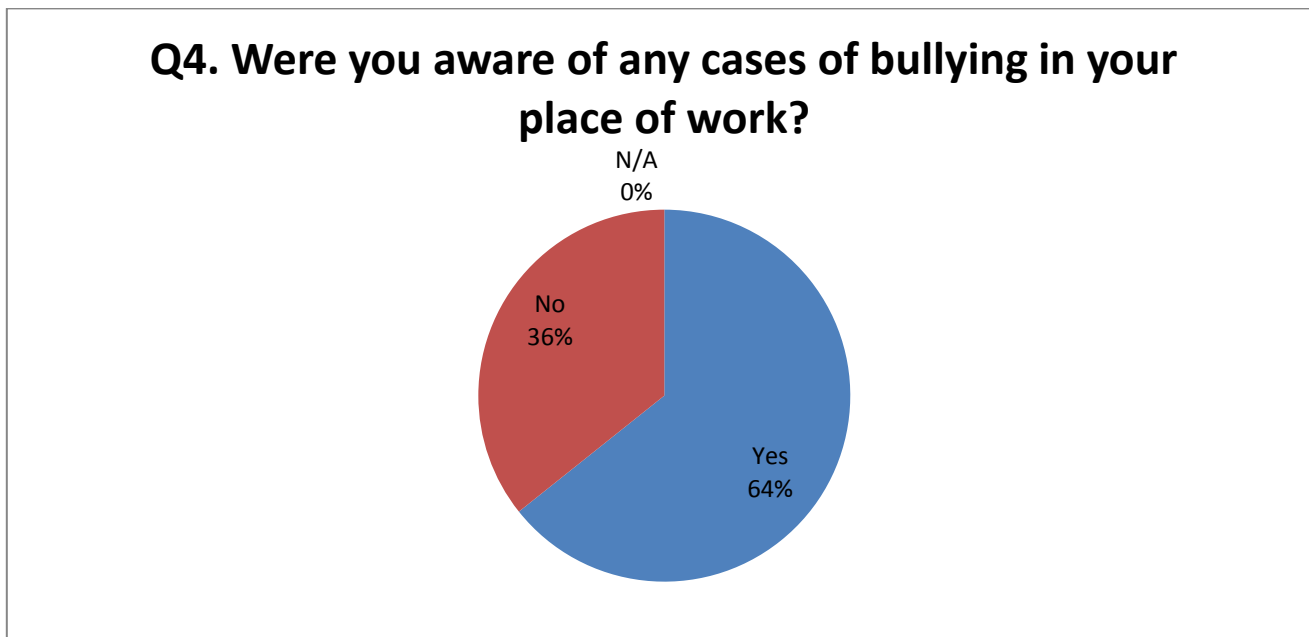
Chart 4 clearly shows that 64% of students interviewed were aware of cases of bullying and harassment in their place of work. However, this is not to say that there were no cases of bullying at the workplaces of the other 36% of students, as the literature under legislation states that some cases of bullying can go unnoticed by members of staff for months or even years. These results do indicate that the rules and regulations of bullying must be tightened in order to decrease the number of cases of bullying in the workplace.

Chart 5 – Question 5

Q5. Were these cases brought to the HR Managers attention?

N/A
29%

Yes
50%

No
21%
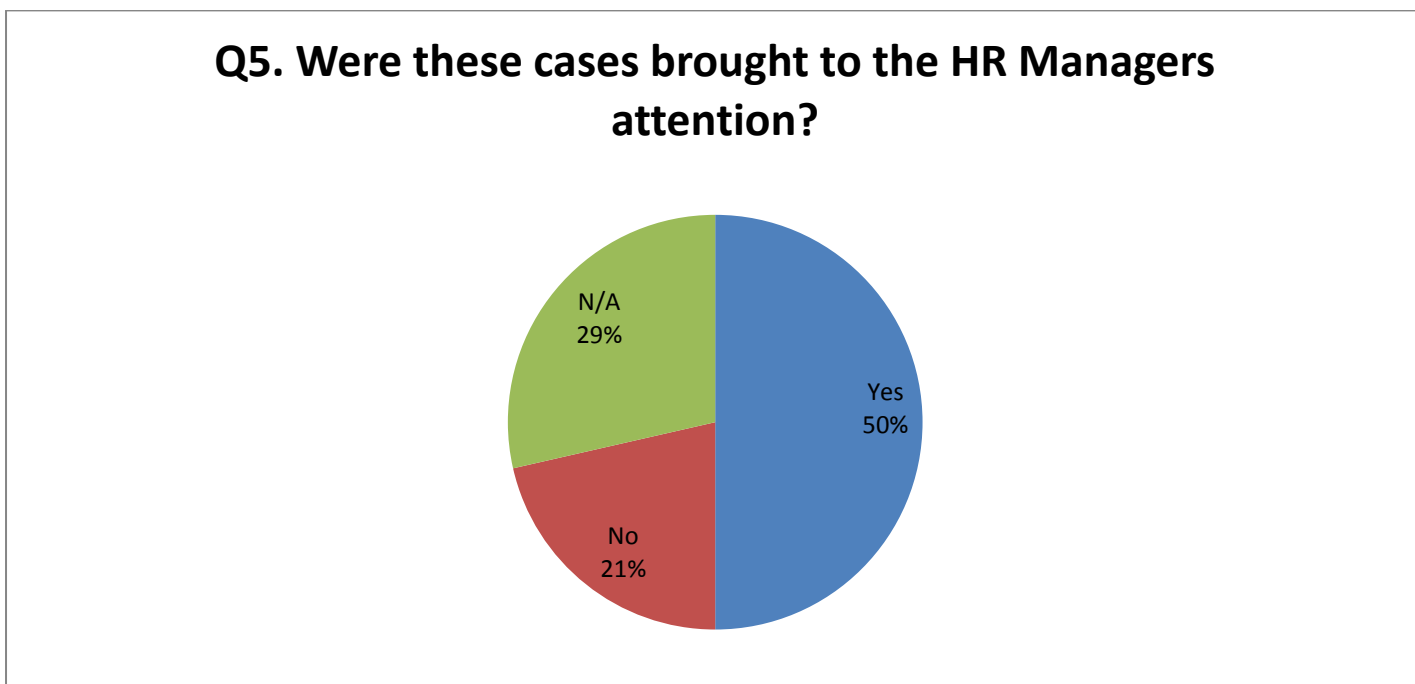
With reference to the literature, and how some cases of bullying can go un-noticed for months or even years, it is no surprise that only 50% of students said that these cases of bullying were brought to the HR Manager's attention. However, in the results of Q5, 64% of students said that they were aware of bullying, which means that according to these results 14% of the interviewees were aware of bullying but they were not brought to the HR Manager's attention.

Chart 6 – Question 6
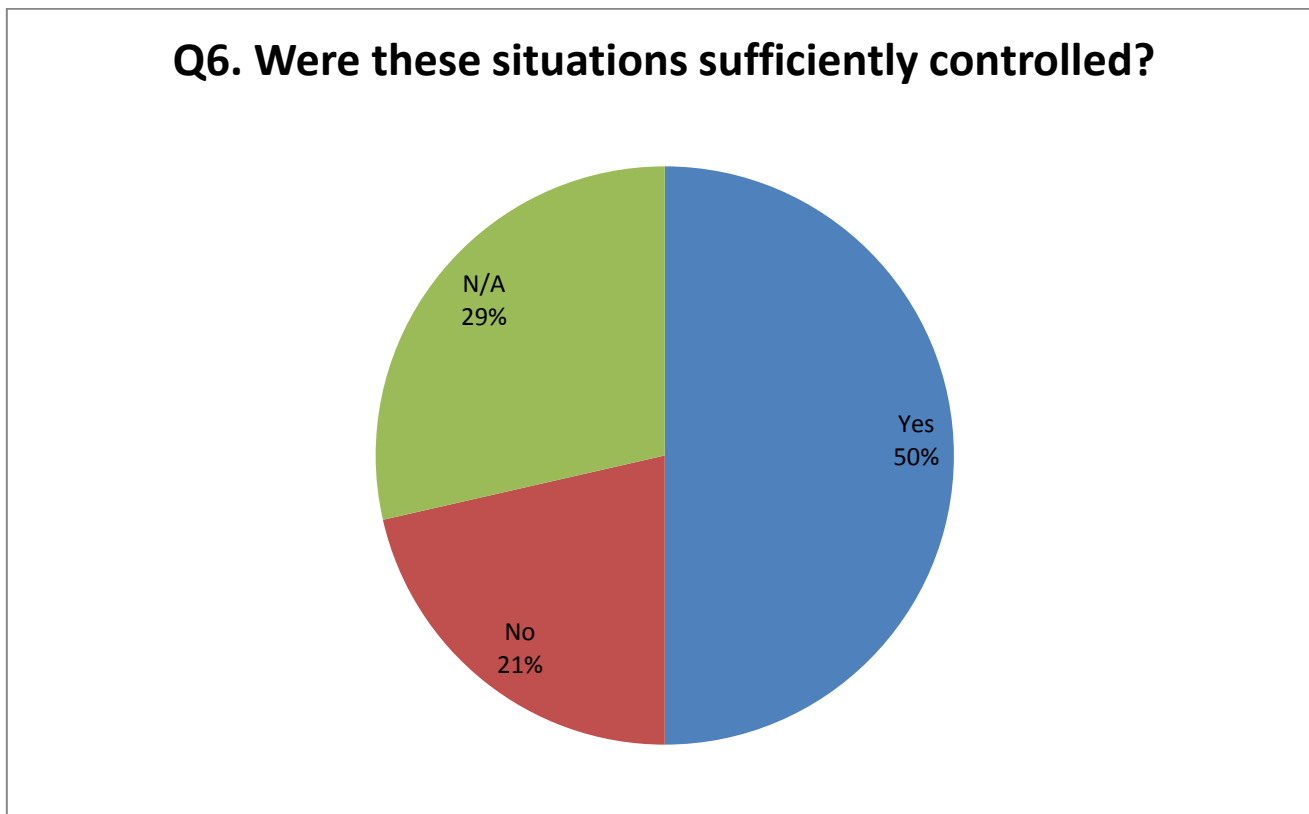
Chart 6 shows that only 50% of bullying cases which students were aware of were brought to the HR Manager's attention and sufficiently controlled. This in turn means that 21% of students were working in an organisation where bullying could be seen to be accepted as these cases were not sufficiently controlled, therefore meaning that the organisations should re-look at their policies on bullying and harassment to ensure protocols are set and abided by, by all members of staff.

Chart 7 – Question 7

Q7. Did you feel that because you were a placement student you were treated differently?

N/A
0%

No
33%

Yes
67%
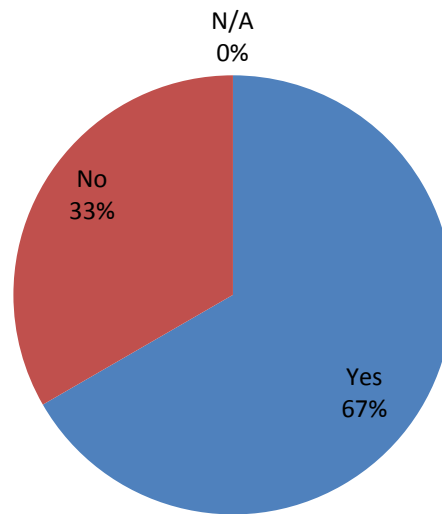
Although placement students should be treated as equals by both their managers and their team co-workers, this chart shows that 67% of students interviewed felt that they were treated differently in some way. This was found to be due to a number of reasons, which links directly with the literature under hospitality internships. The main reason which was stated from interviewees was that these students were automatically placed in a higher job than their co-workers and so were often sneered at.

Chart 8 – Question 8

Q8. At any point whilst on placement did you feel it difficult to express your views of a situation and as a result felt unwanted at work?

N/A
0%

Yes
47%

No
53%
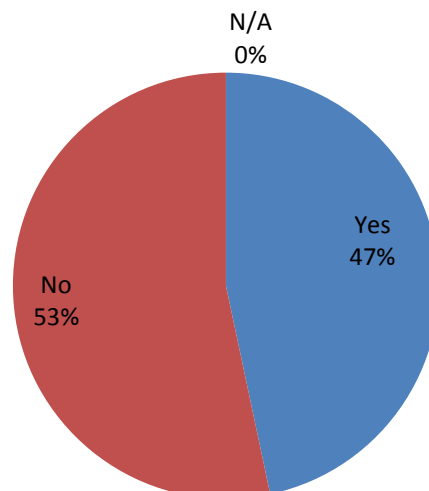
In any workplace it can be difficult for staff to feel 100% comfortable about expressing their views. However, this should not lead to members of the workforce feeling unwanted at work. From the responses received from the interviewees, 47% of students found it difficult to express their opinions and so felt unwanted. The author found that one student in particular felt so unwanted after not feeling confident enough to express their views that they tried to leave their placement on a number of occasions.

Chart 9 – Question 9

Q9. Whilst on placement did you feel you were being judged by other members of staff for the position in which you started working?
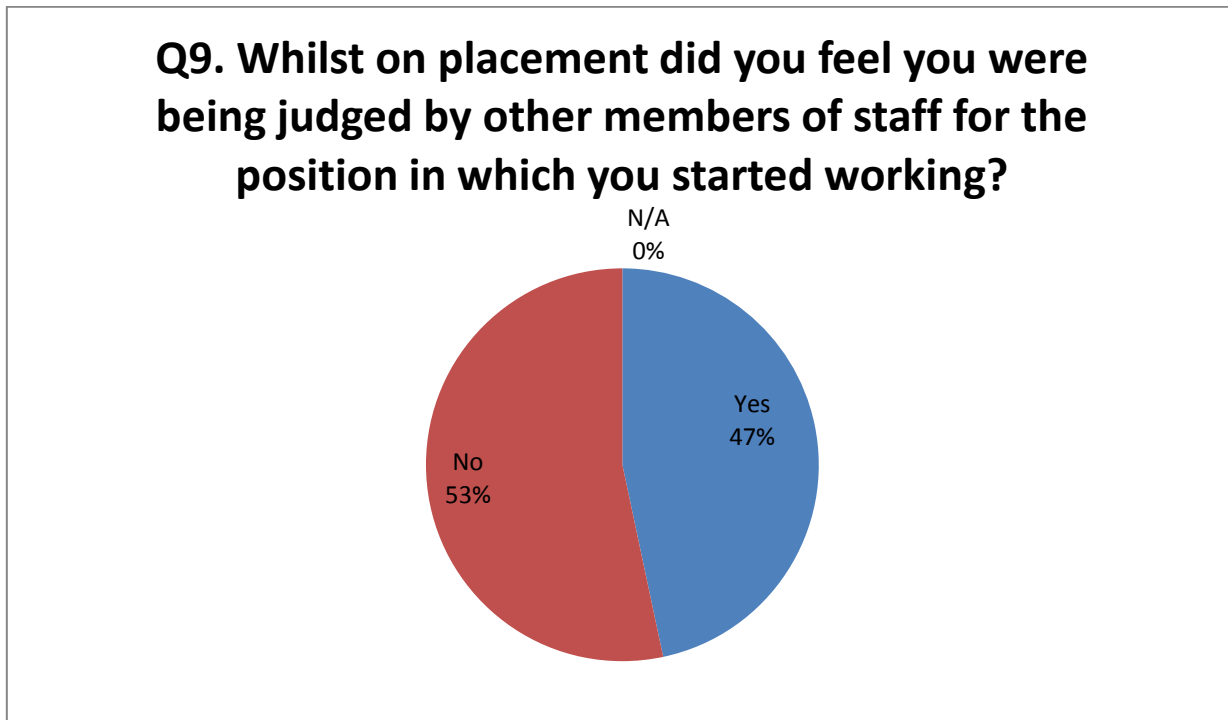
Chart 9 shows that 47% of placement students felt that they were being judged by other members of staff for the position which they had started working in. This chart links directly with the literature under Hospitality Internships as well as Q7, and that the reason students felt that they were treated differently was because they were on their placement.

Chart 10 – Question 10

Q10. Did this result in any unpleasantness between you and these members of staff concerned?
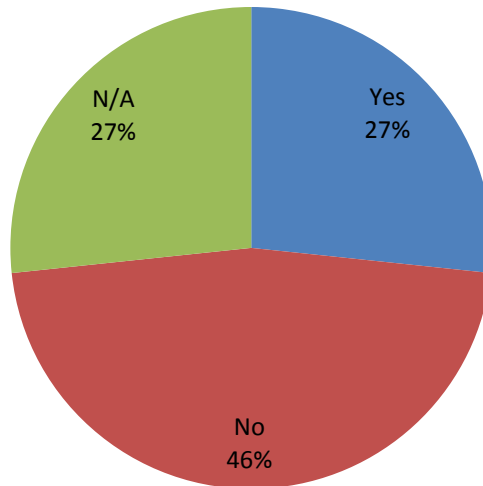
Chart 10 shows that only 27% of the students who felt they had been judged felt that there was unpleasantness between themselves and other members of staff due to the position in which they had started working.

Chart 11 – Question 11

Q11. Was your morale ever low at any point as a result of any unpleasantness?
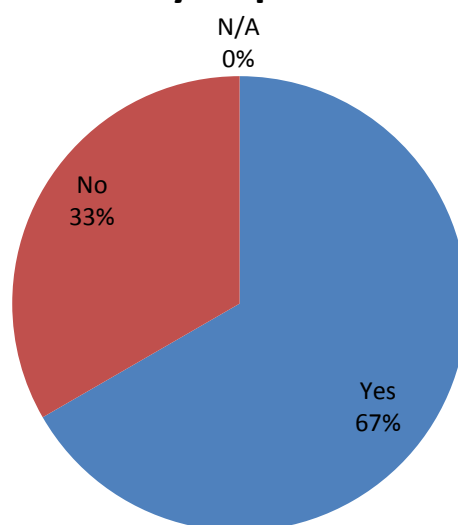
As referred to in the literature under Hospitality Internships, it is often very difficult for students to feel 100% comfortable in their placement year, but this chart shows that 67% of students felt low after unpleasantness. One question to consider here is if students had been fully aware of HR policies, could something have been done to ensure that their morale was lifted and that no unpleasantness occurred?

Chart 12 – Question 12

Q12. At any point during your placement did you consider leaving due to difficulties with other members of staff?

N/A
0%

Yes
33%

No
67%
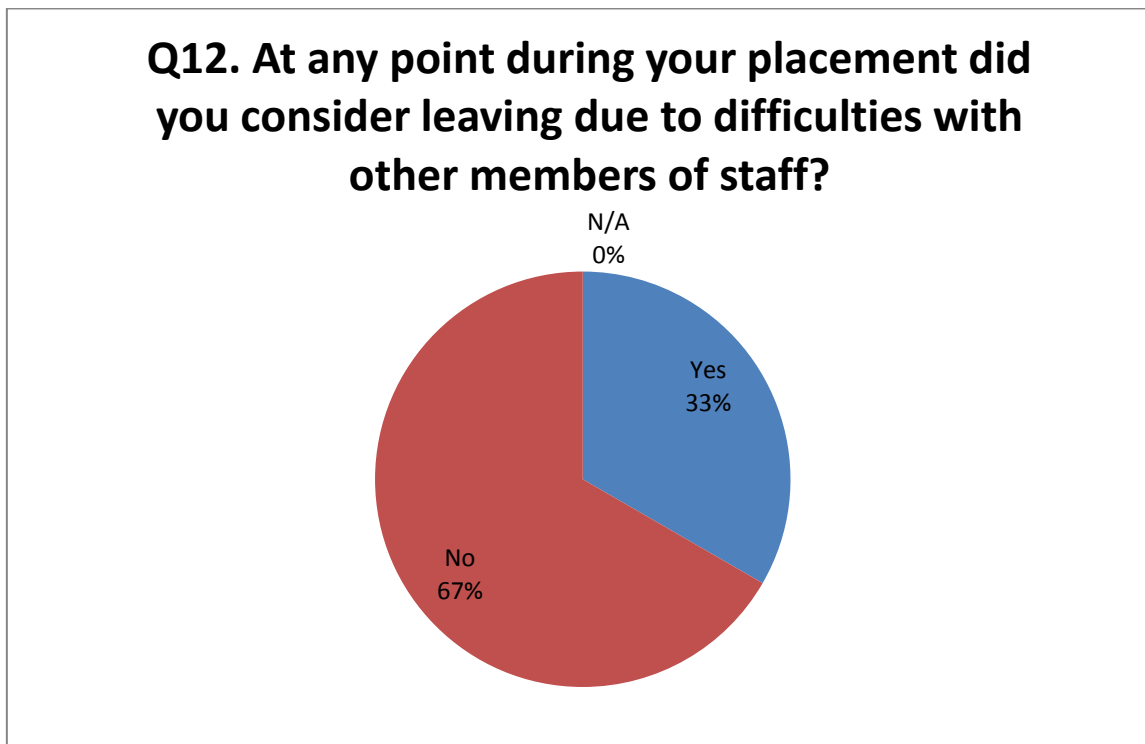
Although this chart shows that only 33% of student considered leaving their placement due to difficulties with other members of staff, this figure should either be much lower or not there at all. If HR practices were sufficiently publicised, staff would understand that bullying and harassment is in no way acceptable and this would result in fewer staff wanting to leave due to difficulties. The 67% of students who did not consider leaving either had no experiences of difficulties with other members of staff or had a pro-active Human Resource department who resolved any conflict promptly before getting out of hand.

Chart 13 – Question 13
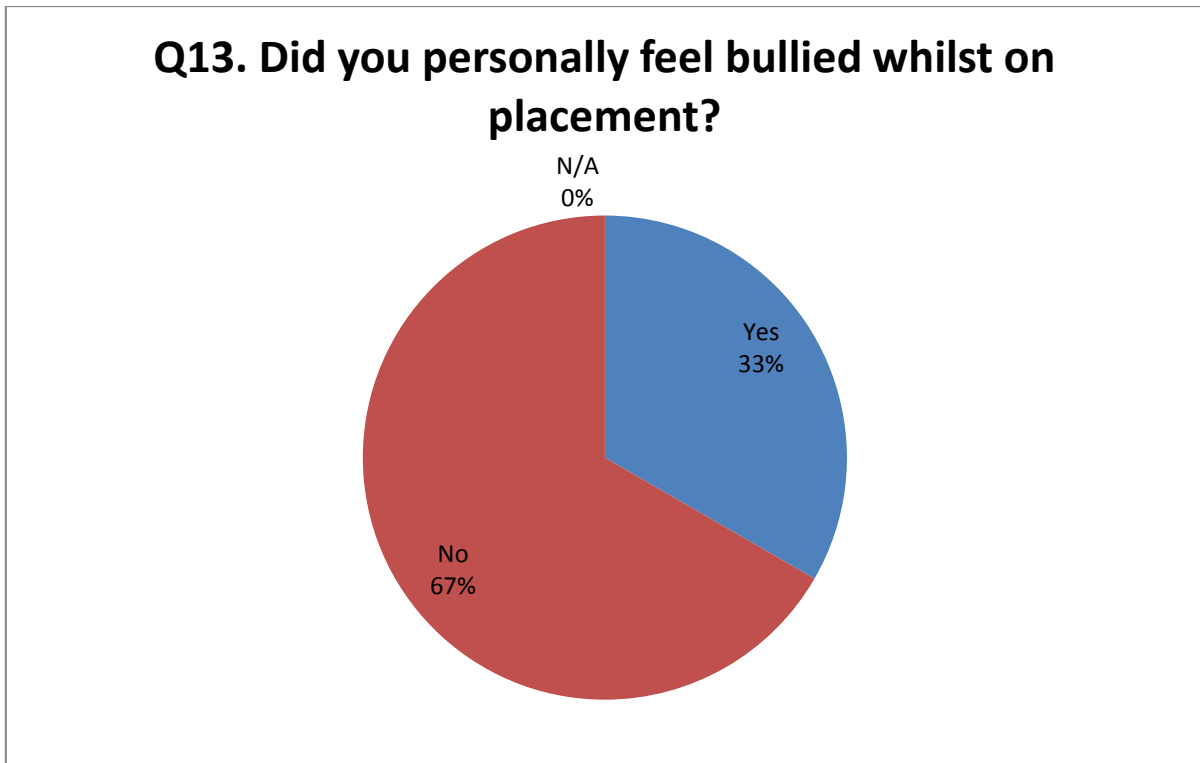
The 33% of students who felt that they were personally bullied whilst on placement, believed that if their Human Resource department had implemented and adhered to practices regarding bullying and harassment they would have not have been bullied and so would have enjoyed their placement much more. Two students, who felt they were bullied, had second thoughts about working in the hospitality industry as they believed that the long working hours meant increased pressure ultimately leading to staff bullying other members of staff.

4.3 Summary

In conclusion, the semi-structured interviews conducted, revealed suitable quantitative data, in order to be able to answer this research paper's question. The semi-structured interviews proved to be a suitable method of collecting this data, as not only were the questions answered, but the author was able to move away from the questions, asking for more in depth information about the student's own personal experiences of bullying and harassment.

5.0 Conclusions

From the information gathered within the study it can be concluded that bullying and harassment is present within the student placement workplace, however, the reasons as to why students are subject to this is unknown. From the evidence it is clear that there is a divided opinion on whether or not the human resource departments of the hospitality organisations where the students did their placements were useful when dealing with bulling and/or harassment. Although many authors define bullying and harassment differently, the evidence from this research states that just under 70% of the interviewees were unaware of the difference between the two.

It is evident that not all the instances of bullying and harassment were reported directly to the Human Resource Managers, although the majority of those interviewed were aware of HR practices within the company. Whilst many of the placement students had no one in whom they could confide, just under 60% of the volunteers did have a confidante.

With regards to the final question (question 14) of the interview, although not many of the interviewees were willing to give details on their own personal experiences of bullying, two of the interviewees stated that they would change the way in which they approached their placement if they were to start all over again. One interviewee believes that if they had approached their Human Resource manager sooner concerning their issues, their placement would have been an entirely different and more positive experience, especially their relationship with other members of staff as well as the opportunities available. The second interviewee, who was willing to go into detail, wishes that they had not given up on their placement and again approached the Human Resource manager with their problems. Unfortunately, as this student was unaware of the protocols concerning bullying and harassment, they let their issues get on top of them and ultimately resigned from their placement.

5.1 Limitations of the study

Although the study gives clear information about different students' experiences of bullying and harassment whilst on placement, there are two limitations which should be considered if the research is going to be developed any further. The first of these limitations is that only placements students from Sheffield Hallam University were asked about bullying and harassment within their placement workplace. Secondly, due to the confidentiality of this topic, it is not only difficult to publish the results revealed, but the author found it very difficult to gather extra information about the students' personal experiences of bullying and harassment during their placement. An additional limitation to the research is that no human resource managers were interviewed about their experiences of bullying and harassment.

5.2 Recommendations for Future Research

In order to fully understand the relationships which the Human Resource Managers have with the placement students, it is essential that secondary qualitative research is undertaken with these managers to be able to understand bullying and harassment procedures in a variety of hospitality organisations. This would not only provide future researchers with the opportunity to compare the experiences of students and HR Managers with each other but also the chance to gain an insight into the different procedures in different hospitality organisations. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic it is impossible to avoid the anonymity which must remain when discussing bullying and harassment. However, it is advised that if this research were to be undertaken for a second time, it would most probably be beneficial for the author to get to know the interviewees prior to the interviews, in order to be able to have general discussion about their experiences as well as informing them fully about the content of the interviews.

5.3 Recommendations for Human Resource Departments

Although it is difficult to give recommendations due to the lack of research received directly from Human Resource departments, it would be advisable for them to ensure that whenever a new placement student or member of staff, be this full or part-time, commences their working contract that they are fully briefed on the departmental polices regarding bullying and harassment. Furthermore, in order for the department to be satisfied that the placement student and all other new members of staff have been fully briefed, it would be advised that each new member of staff signs a document confirming their understanding of the policies regarding bullying and harassment, and what action they should take in the event of them being subject to such behaviours.

Additionally, it would be advisable to ensure that all departments have information regarding bullying and harassment, which is accessible at all times to all members of staff. Such information could be the ACAS leaflet, which is referred to in the literature under Current Human Resource Practices. This leaflet gives employees information about bullying and harassment, details the responsibilities of employers and guides employees on action they should take if they find themselves being bullied in the workplace.

It is clear from this research that a number of the placements students who were interviewed found it challenging to approach their human resource department concerning any issues. It is believed that if these departments made it clear exactly what support they can provide for members of staff when they start working, the students would feel more comfortable approaching the department throughout their placement.

5.4 Recommendations for Students

It is often very difficult for students to adapt to a working environment away from university for the third year of a four year degree course. As researched in this paper, some students had a difficult experience with other members of staff due to the position which the student held, as well as some being affected by bullying and harassment. In order for students to fully be able to take advantage of the opportunities provided it is vital that they talk to members of staff in the Human Resource department as soon as they feel that they have any problems. If problems arise, in order for students to enjoy their placement it is imperative that they talk to a member of the Human Resource department sooner rather than later in an attempt to improve their time at the organisation.

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7.0 Appendices

7.1 Tables

7.1.1 - Table 1 – Acts of Bullying

Type of Bullying	Definition
Negative Act	'We can divide the negative behaviour most frequently identified with bullying into the following categories: personal derogation (humiliation and personal criticism), work related harassment (withholding of information and having one's responsibilities removed), social exclusion, violent threats and intimidation and work overload' (Einarsen and Raknes, 1999, p19)
Persistent	Bullying will normally refer to behaviour that is repeated and persistent. Therefore, while it can be unpleasant to be the target of someone's occasional aggressive behaviour, such behaviour would in most cases be excluded from the definition. The exception here would be those cases where intimidation behaviour of a severe nature (e.g. physical violence or threat of physical violence) leaves the target in a permanent state of fear.
Long Term	In some cases workplace bullying may be resolved in its early phases by means of organisational intervention or by initiatives from those involved or other concerned parties. In other incidents, one of the parties involved may decide to leave. However, the long-term nature of the phenomenon is one of the most salient features of the problem. In one recent study of 5,300 British employees, two out of three people currently bullied reported that the process had lasted for more than one year (Hoel and Cooper, 2000b, p224). The prolonged nature of the exposure is particularly necessary in understanding the severe effect bullying may have on targets as well as the likelihood of finding a solution to the problem (Hoel and Cooper 2000b, p224).
Imbalance of Power	When an equal balance of power exists between two individuals in a conflict situation we would not refer to the situation as bullying. However, it is important to note that power may be formal, drawn from one's hierarchical position within the organisation, or informal, referring to sources of power such as personal contacts, organisation standing and experience. Knowledge of an opponent's vulnerabilities may be a further source of informal power often exploited in cases of bullying.
Subjective Perception	Most researchers today would agree that what matters in cases of bullying is the subjective perceptions of targets, or the meaning they attach to their experience. In other words, to understand the phenomenon of bullying we need to explore those factors that may influence how the negative behaviour or bullying acts are perceived (Einarsen, 1999, p14).

Source: adapted from Tehrani (2001)

7.1.2 - Table 2 – Individual Definitions of Bullying

Author	Definition of Bullying
Hannabuss (1998, p 305)	'Bullying is an issue which has been for far too long swept under the carpet. It causes anxiety, sickness, low morale, tensions, distrust, overwork, and stress. It may arise from workplace aggression or from sexual harassment. Many factors cause it: manipulation, aggression, exploitation, coercive management styles and practices, personality clashes, machismo in the organisational cultures, gender politics and stereotyping, power play and patterns laid down in childhood.'
Oade(2009, p 2)	'Workplace Bullying is about • A personalised, often sustained attack on one colleague by another colleague using behaviours which are emotionally and psychologically punishing. • Introducing a dynamic into a workplace relationship which involved a purposed attempt by one colleague to injure another colleague's self-esteem, self-confidence and reputation or to undermine their competence to carry out their work duties effectively. • The degree to which the person using bullying behaviour chooses to handle their relationship with a colleague in a way that involved removing power from their colleague and placing it with themselves.'
Robinson and Maines (2008, p 11)	'Bullying is a subjective experience and can take many forms. • Harmful, carried out by an individual or a group • Takes place repeatedly, over time • Repetitive, wilful or persistent • An imbalance of power, leaving the person being bullied feeling defenceless • Causes harm to those who are powerless to stop it • Can take many forms: verbal, physical, psychological.'
Tehrani (2001, p 4)	'Bullying emerged when one or several individuals persistently over a period of time perceive themselves to be on the receiving end of negative actions from one or several persons, in a situation where the target of bullying has difficulty in defending him or herself against these action.'
Thompson (2009, p 7)	'The aggressive behaviour arising from the deliberate intent to cause physical or psychological distress to others.'
Witheridge (1999) cited in Sheehan et al (1999)	'Bullying is offensive discrimination through persistent, vindictive, cruel or humiliating behaviour.'

Source adapted from Hannabuss (1998), Oade (2009), Robinsons and Maines (2008), Tehrani (2001), Thompson (2009) and Witheridge (2006)

7.1.3 - Table 3– Menaces or Motivators within the Service Sector

Menaces	Motivators
Aggressors controlling others by intimidation. "I harass other to pay attention to me. Are you scared of me, you will do what I want."	Are assertive. They understand themselves and what is required to do a job well from them and the person who they are trying to motivate.
Interrogators find fault in others by continuous questioning. "I am more powerful as your behaviour is inappropriate."	Coach. Aim to be someone who can walk alongside other staff, offering support and honesty.
Aloof managers' control others by not communicating what is required often leaving certain members of staff very confused.	Are communicators. Share targets; let staff know who they can approach if they are in difficulty.

Caterersearch.com (2006)

7.1.4 - Table 4 – Institutionalised Bullying handed down from one generation to the next

Institution	Bullying Methods handed down from one generation to the next
Hospitality - Kitchen	'Verbal and physical abuse of chefs in the high pressured kitchen environment has been endemic for many years. Although kitchen abuse has been almost glamorised through various television programmes, in the real world it is still a wide spread issue' (Bloisi and Hoel 2007, p134).
Civil Service - Police	'Hierarchical organisations, with a strong tradition of positional power and directive leadership, can effectively sanction a form of institutionalised bullying within their organisation culture' (Dick and Cassell 2002). The police is a good example of this institutionalised power due to the ranking of officers.

7.2 Blanket Email

Sites Groups   amrose@my.shu.ac.uk |

[ ] Search Mail   Search the web   Show search options
                                      Create a filter

101 Cookbooks - Super Natural Every Day: Published - 19 hours ago

« Back to Drafts   Move to Inbox   Labels ▼   More actions ▼

Please Help!   New window
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Send   Save Now   Discard   Draft saved at 14:12 (4 hours ago)

To: Hospitality Group for Project

Add Cc | Add Bcc

Subject: Please Help!

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Dear all final year hospitality students,

If you've been out on placement, you can help!!
I'm looking for volunteers to participate in an interview to help me with my project. My project is on Bullying and Harassment within the student placement workplace, and I'm just trying to get an insight into people's opinion on the topic and to find out if they were subject to it whilst out on placement. It doesn't matter if you did or didn't experience it, but if you have a spare half an hour your help would be greatly appreciated.
I'm only looking for around 20 people to interview and would be grateful if you could get back to me by the end of today - 7th March 2011 - so that I can get the ball rolling and start to arrange interviews with you at your convenience.

Thank you for your help

Alison

7.3 Template of Semi-Structured Interview

1. Were you aware of Human Resource practices whilst on placement with regards to Bullying and Harassment?

2. Do you understand the difference between Bullying and Harassment?

3. Did you have someone at work who you could confidentially talk to, whether this be another member of staff or your line manager, concerning any queries or worries you had?

4. Were you aware of any cases of bullying in your place of work?

5. Were these cases brought to the HR Manager's attention?

6. Were these situations sufficiently controlled?

7. Did you feel that because you were a placement student you were treated differently?

8. At any point whilst on placement, did you feel it difficult to express your views of a situation and as a result felt unwanted at work?

9. Whilst on placement did you feel you were being judged by other members of staff for the position in which you started working?

10. Did this result in any unpleasantness between you and these staff members concerned?

11. Was your morale ever low at any point as a result of any unpleasantness?

12. At any point during your placement did you consider leaving due to difficulties with other members of staff?

13 Did you personally feel bullied whilst on placement?

14. If yes, please go into as much detail about your experience and what you would change if you put into that situation again.