

THE RELATIONSHIP OF GENDER-BASED PUBLIC HARASSMENT TO BODY IMAGE,
SELF-ESTEEM, AND AVOIDANCE BEHAVIOR

A Dissertation

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Women have been plagued by gender-based public harassment since at least as early as 1875 (Bowman, 1993). Gender-based public harassment is harassment directed by men towards women. It occurs in public and semi-public places, can be verbal or non-verbal, often has a sexual component, and can be degrading, objectifying, and/or threatening (Bowman; Gardner, 1995). The current study presents information regarding the prevalence of gender-based public harassment, examples of harassment that fall into this category, possible explanations for the pervasiveness of gender-based public harassment, and the individual and societal effects of this form of harassment.

There is relatively little research directly applicable to gender-based public harassment, and this study was conducted to explore how harassing behaviors that women experience, and their emotional reactions to these behaviors, are related to body image, self-esteem, objectification, and avoidance behavior. Statistically significant results indicate that experiences of gender-based public harassment, and particularly negative emotional responses, are associated with low self-esteem, dislike of and shame about one's body, and preoccupation with one's appearance. Negative reactions were also associated with avoidance of going places when alone. Additionally, the results indicate that women of color are subjected to more frequent gender-based public harassment than are white women.

Self-esteem is also shown to be correlated with body image and explains a substantial amount of variance in the body image variables. The implications of all results, limitations of the study, and future directions for research are discussed.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based public harassment is harassment that occurs between strangers in public or semi-public places, is usually directed by men to women, and can be verbal or non-verbal. This form of harassment often has a sexual nature and includes multiple forms of harassing behaviors, such as insults, innuendo, shouting, fondling, and ogling. It cannot be predicted by age, race, or social class (Gardner, 1995). It has been documented at least as early as 1875 (Bowman, 1993).

Current research indicates a high prevalence of gender-based public harassment. In two studies of Canadian women, 81% to 85% of female participants reported experiencing some form of harassment, and many had been subjected to more than one type of harassment (Lenton, Smith, Fox, & Morra, 1999; MacMillan, Nierobisz, & Welsh, 2000). A third study, conducted in the United States, found that 61% of women reported being the victims of sexually suggestive harassment everyday or often, whereas men heard such comments much less frequently (Nielsen, 2000). Nielsen also found that women of color reported experiencing higher frequencies of harassing comments than white women reported.

Explanatory Theories of Harassment

Some researchers have suggested reasons for the pervasiveness of gender-based public harassment. Benard and Schlaffer (1996) proposed the male-bonding theory, stating that men have expressed that harassment is “fun” and provides a feeling of camaraderie with other men. As evidence for this argument, 20% of men stated they would not harass if they were alone. Further evidence comes from Gardner (1995), who found that some men seem to view harassment as playful. Additionally, gay men will sometimes harass to fit in, which may also

support a male-bonding theory. However, a few men reported that they harass purposefully to anger or humiliate women (Benard & Schlaffer), and some may use harassment as a way to select rape victims (Bowman, 1993).

Lenton et al. (1999) put forth three other theories: social-structural, sociocultural, and social control theories. All three theories demonstrate the power that men hold in society, but they vary in the arguments for why that power is expressed. According to the social-structural theory, women are an oppressed group in society, and men are the oppressors, due to men having access to more resources than women. They therefore have more power, and harassment is a reflection of that power difference. The sociocultural argument claims that harassment is due more to cultural gender norms than to societal structure, with men being socialized to be aggressive and dominant and women being socialized to be more fearful and submissive. According to the social control theory, men view the public domain as their territory, and they harass to maintain their power as the dominant group and keep women out of the public domain.

Additionally, it seems that women have somehow come to be viewed as “open persons.” Erving Goffman (see Bowman, 1993; Gardner, 1995) described “civil inattention” as the way strangers behave towards each other in public, which essentially means ignoring each other, except for briefly meeting each other’s eyes. The two “acceptable” exceptions to this are when there is a noticeable similarity between the strangers or when one of the strangers is an open person. An open person is someone who falls into a category that allows civil inattention to lapse, such as someone who is accompanied by a child or pet. Individuals who do not meet society’s standards for what is ideal may also fall into the open person category. It appears that men have learned to treat women as open persons.

Societal and Individual Effects of Harassment

Gender-based public harassment has effects on both societal and individual levels. The primary societal effect is that harassment contributes to fear of men. This fear makes it more difficult for women to meet and trust men, which requires that men work harder to earn a woman's trust. In addition to avoidance of men, women may avoid public places in general. Gardner (1995) found that agoraphobic and non-agoraphobic women exhibited similar patterns of behavior and used similar strategies to cope with being in public. McHugh (2000) asserts that Agoraphobia should be considered a gendered construct: Because the majority of individuals in the United States who have been diagnosed with Agoraphobia are women, it may be that Agoraphobia is linked to cultural factors, such as women's limited societal roles and women being socialized from childhood to express more fear than men. Women who experience this fear or who avoid going out due to harassment may be diagnosed with Agoraphobia, which means they are being told they have an irrational fear. However, in reality, women's fear of public places *is* rational, and they should not be pathologized for it.

On an individual level, women may remain upset about being harassed long after an incident occurs. They may begin going into public with companions and feel less safe in a variety of contexts. Although men are victims of crime more often than are women, women are more afraid of crime, particularly rape (Stanko, 1995), and sexual harassment contributes to women's concern for their safety. As with rape, there can be a victim-blaming aspect to gender-based public harassment, which may be why so little has been done to address this form of harassment.

Women may also feel angry or become anxious or depressed in response to public harassment. They may feel shame about their bodies and become less comfortable with their sexualities. Some researchers have pointed out that body image is connected to self-esteem (e.g., Polce-Lynch, Myers, Kliewer, & Kilmartin, 2001; Webster & Tiggemann, 2003). If public harassment affects women's body image, it may also affect their self-esteem.

Gender-based public harassment may be connected with objectification. According to objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), objectification occurs when a woman's body or body parts are viewed as representative of the woman. Repeated objectification leads to self-objectification, which is the internalization of women's objectification. Objectification can lead to feelings of shame if a woman does not meet cultural standards of beauty. Women may also feel anxious about how their bodies will be evaluated, and they may become detached from their bodies. Objectification can contribute to depression, sexual dysfunction, and eating disorders. Both compliments and criticism contribute to self-objectification, as they both encourage women to attend to their bodies. Objectification has been found to be linked to body dissatisfaction, body surveillance, body shame, appearance anxiety, and disordered eating (Calogero, Herbozo, & Thompson, 2009; Greenleaf & McGreer, 2006; Moradi, Dirks, & Matteson, 2005; Noll & Fredrickson, 1998).

Purpose of the Study

It is clear that gender-based public harassment is pervasive and has multiple negative effects on women and society. However, little attention has been directed towards this issue. This may be due in part to both men and women viewing harassment as either trivial or with a romanticized interpretation. Gardner (1995) reported that many women use a romanticized

rhetoric in response to harassment. From this perspective, women may view harassment as flattery, as due to the nature of men (i.e., “Boys will be boys”), or as harmless.

Of the little research that has specifically looked at gender-based public harassment, two major studies were done in Canada, meaning the results may not be generalizable to women in the United States or in other countries. Research that has looked at harassment in work and academic settings is also not generalizable because the effects of such harassment are different than the effects of public harassment. MacMillan et al. (2000) identified four specific contexts that harassment might affect. They found that for women who were harassed by strangers, there were negative effects for all four contexts. However, women who were harassed by someone they knew were more likely to experience negative effects in only one of those contexts. In work or school settings, a woman may know her harasser, but public harassment is defined as occurring between strangers. Additionally, women at work or school may be able to more directly respond to harassment than they can on the street, such as by turning to employment policies that bar sexual harassment. Opportunities for action are more limited in public.

The Present Study

It is hoped that the present study will bring much-needed attention to gender-based public harassment, demonstrate that it is not “harmless,” encourage society to begin addressing the problem, and provide new avenues for research. Because there is limited research on this topic, this study is meant to be exploratory, and all hypotheses are two-tailed: It is hypothesized that gender-based public harassment will be associated with body image, self-esteem, avoidance behavior, and objectification; that body image will be related to self-esteem; and that harassment will demonstrate differences based on racial identity.

Definition of Terms As Used in This Study

Agoraphobia: a diagnosis in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV-TR* (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). A person with this diagnosis feels anxiety about being in situations in which escape may be difficult or help unavailable, so the person either avoids the situation or endures it, but experiences high distress.

Avoidance Behavior: women's tendency to avoid going out in public, particularly when alone

Body Image: how a woman perceives her physical appearance

Gender-based Public Harassment: verbal and non-verbal harassment that occurs in public or semi-public places; is typically directed at women by men; often has a sexual component; and if there is speech, it is likely to be degrading, objectifying, or threatening. Examples include staring, insults, sexual innuendo, vulgar speech, fondling, and stalking. It may also be referred to as "street harassment."

Objectification: separating a woman's body, body parts, and/or sexual function from her person, and viewing these parts as representative of the woman as a whole.

Self-Esteem: a person's overall evaluation of his or her worth

Self-Objectification: a woman's internalization of repeated objectification by others; she comes to view herself as represented by her body, body parts, and/or sexual function

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions, Types, and Prevalence of Gender-based Public Harassment

Gender-based public harassment is not a new phenomenon. It has been documented at least as early as 1875 in a lawsuit in which a young woman described being harassed by a train conductor (Bowman, 1993). One might think that with a history of more than a century of this type of conduct, measures might have been taken to decrease public harassment and take action against the perpetrators. However, that thought is a far cry from reality. Rather, as Bowman observes,

Street harassment is a phenomenon that has not generally been viewed by academics, judges, or legislators as a problem requiring legal redress, either because these mostly male observers have not noticed the behavior or because they have considered it trivial and thus not within the proper scope of the law (p. 519).

Public harassment is verbal or nonverbal harassment that occurs in public places (e.g., streets, parks, alleys) and semi-public places (e.g., restaurants, movie theaters). The harassment often has a sexual nature, and, if there is any speech, it is degrading, objectifying, and possibly threatening (Bowman, 1993; Gardner, 1995). Public harassment is pervasive, and both perpetrators and victims can be of any age, race, class, or sexual orientation. The perpetrators are nearly always male, the victims nearly always female. Gardner specifically defines public harassment as “that group of abuses, harrings, and annoyances characteristic of public places and uniquely facilitated by communication in public. Public harassment includes pinching, shouting, hitting, shouted remarks, vulgarity, insults, sly innuendo, ogling, and stalking” (p. 4).

In a diary study, Swim, Hyers, Cohen, and Ferguson (2001) divided “everyday sexism” into three categories: traditional gender-role prejudice and stereotyping, including misogyny; demeaning and derogatory comments and behaviors; and sexual objectification. According to their results, on average women reported witnessing or being subjected to everyday sexism at least once a week. Almost half of these events were directed at women in general. The rest were directed at the study participant, another specific woman, or a combination of the three targets. Some of these incidents involved public harassment. Seventy-five percent of women reported becoming angry in response, and depression and anxiety were other common reactions.

Despite its prevalence, there is very little contemporary research on public harassment. Most of the sexual harassment research focuses on harassment in the workplace and university settings (Lenton, Smith, Fox, & Morra, 1999). This neglect is likely due to two factors, according to Lenton and colleagues. First, unless it rises to the level of assault, public harassment is not illegal; some men and women construe it as trivial or even flattering. In fact, Gardner (1995) discusses how many men and women romanticize public harassment. Second, public places are viewed as incidental routes to get from point A to point B, so rules of conduct have not received the same level of scrutiny as in private places.

Although estimates of the frequency and severity of public harassment vary, the sparse research does indicate a high prevalence. In 2000, Nielsen surveyed a small, mixed-gender sample (n = 100). The majority of women (61%) reported being the victims of sexually suggestive harassment every day or often. Most men (86%), on the other hand, only heard such comments sometimes, rarely, or never. Nielsen also found that nearly a quarter of women of color heard suggestive comments daily, compared to only 14% of white women.

Lenton et al. (1999) used random digit dialing to interview 1,990 Canadian women. Almost 81% of the participants had been stared at in a way that made them feel uncomfortable, and 22% had experienced other forms of harassment, such as offensive speech and Peeping Toms. Seventy-seven percent of the participants had been subjected to more than one type of harassment. Thirty percent had experienced the most “severe” type of harassment, when the harasser touched or tried to touch the woman. The immediate response for most of the women was fear or anger. However, for some the fear was also longer-lasting, with nearly 20% reporting that they were still fearful or upset about the incident, even though in some cases the harassment may have occurred years before. Few women attempted to report the harassment. Almost 10% reported the harassment to the police, but behavioral changes were more common than reporting the harassment to the police. Nearly half of the women began bringing a companion or dog with them when they went out; avoiding certain places or men; staying more alert; or taking precautionary measures, such as checking their cars before getting in.

Similar to Lenton and colleagues (1999), MacMillan, Nierobisz, and Welsh (2000) found that 85% of their Canadian women study participants had experienced some type of harassment from strangers, and stranger harassment was much more prevalent and extensive than non-stranger harassment. Sixty-six percent of women had experienced obscene phone calls, 60% had received unwanted attention, 32% had been followed, and 18% had seen a man indecently expose himself. For their study, the authors listed four specific circumstances that harassment might affect: feelings of safety when walking alone in their area after dark, using public transportation after dark, walking alone to a car in a parking garage, and being home alone at night. Whereas only one of these contexts was significantly related to non-stranger harassment,

there were strong negative effects for all four contexts for victims of stranger harassment.

Furthermore, “For women who experienced sexual harassment from strangers, each additional experience of harassment decreased the odds of feeling safe” by 17 to 23 percent (p. 315).

The research by MacMillan et al. (2000) demonstrates why literature on harassment in the workplace and academic settings is not as applicable to public harassment. There is a difference in how women perceive harassment from strangers versus non-strangers. Public harassment is perpetrated by strangers, whereas harassment at work or school is most likely perpetrated by someone known to the victim. Additionally, women who are harassed by strangers may have little recourse. There are sexual harassment policies that can protect women at work, but on the street there are fewer policies, and they may be difficult to enforce. As Heben (1995) states, “Women cannot formally complain about street harassment since the law does not recognize street harassment as an issue” (p. 185-186). Even if a woman turns to the police after a man touches her inappropriately, for example, the perpetrator may be long gone by the time the woman returns to the scene. Furthermore, Lenton et al. (1999) observed that police do not often respond to complaints of public harassment. In fact, Gardner (1995) described two women who “chose to complain to police officers; one time, one of a pair of police officers laughed, and the other time, both officers asked the woman for her phone number” (p. 220).

There are a number of other reasons women may not respond to harassment, either by going to an authority figure or through personal confrontation: societal pressure not to respond; concern about being identified as a feminist; fear of retaliation; and fear of being perceived as being impolite, aggressive, or in some other way not typically viewed as feminine (Swim & Hyers, 1999). College students have reported that they do not report on-campus incidents of

sexual harassment for reasons such as “fear of embarrassment, guilt about their own behavior, skepticism that anyone can or will help, and not knowing whom to contact at the school” (Dyer, 2005). For many women, these costs may outweigh the benefits of responding. In fact, Swim and Hyers found that only 45% of women publicly responded when a man made a sexist comment, and only 16% confronted the man directly. Also, Heben (1995) states that African-American women may not report harassment if the harasser is also African-American due to “fear of reinforcing the ‘myth of the black rapist’” (p. 217).

In a hallmark study, Gardner (1995) interviewed 506 men and women in Indianapolis about their experiences as perpetrators and victims of public harassment. The participants came from all social classes; about half were white; most were under 35 years of age; and about 10% identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Gardner (1995) identified three common classifications of public harassment, though some behaviors may fall into more than one category. Exclusionary practices exclude disadvantaged groups of people, either formally or informally. Such individuals are prevented or discouraged from entering some public places. This can include situations such as a building not being handicapped accessible, crime prevention advertisements that suggest women not go out at night, or the individuals in public who implicitly send the message that certain groups of people (e.g., African-American or gay/lesbian/bisexual individuals) are not welcome. Exploitative practices are intrusions into individual privacy that may subject the victim to unwanted behavior. For example, the victim may be photographed as a curiosity, which has been reported by some individuals with disabilities. These practices can also include evaluative inspection or unwelcome touching. The third category contains evaluative practices, which occur when a

stranger provides an evaluative opinion of the victim in a situation where the evaluation is not justifiable. The evaluations can be expressed positively, in which case they may be passed off as complimentary, or negatively. For example, men may hold up scorecards that rate a woman's appearance.

Within each of the above categories, harassing behaviors can be subcategorized as access information intrusions, exploitations of presence, and street remarks (Gardner, 1995). Access information intrusions are attempts to gain information about where and how the woman might be accessible in the future; these can be attempts to find out where the woman works or what her phone number is. Exploitations of presence include scrutiny, following, and touch. Street remarks are evaluative, advisory, or other expressive comments. They may be blatant, such as insults or contemptuous remarks, but they can also be more subtle and ostensibly disguised as flattery.

Gardner (1995) found that women were likely to interpret public harassment with either a romanticized or a politicized rhetoric. Unlike other forms of public harassment (e.g., gay-bashing, racial slurs), gender-based public harassment can sometimes hide behind the guise of innocence or romance. According to the romanticized view, there are four notions about public harassment. The first is that public harassment is harmless, that women also perpetrate it, and that perpetrators can be reliably predicted based on social class or other categorizations. Gardner's research does not remotely support this interpretation. For example, perpetrators cannot be predicted based on social class.

The second romanticized notion is that the nature of men is to blame, that they cannot help it; this is similar to saying, "Boys will be boys." The third romanticized notion is that public

harassment only seems to be insulting, but is actually flattery. Gardner (1995) believes this is a particularly difficult notion to support. For example, how many compliments between friends include obscenity, threats, or slapping? Gardner adds that even the romanticizers cannot always classify harassment as flattery, based on the speed with which the remark can become vulgar or turn into a different form of harassment (e.g., stalking, touching) and on the speed with which the ostensible compliment can be rescinded. Furthermore, even if public harassment is flattering and makes women feel better about themselves, it reinforces traditional gender norms and the division of power between men and women, and it reinforces the view that men have the right to comment on women's appearance.

The fourth romanticized idea (Gardner, 1995) is that public harassment behaviors are simply breaches of etiquette, and the perpetrators do not deserve the criticism they receive. The problem with this point of view is that it leaves room for others "to note that women too breach traditional etiquette when they dress inappropriately, act loosely available, or in other ways denigrate the portrait of the traditional woman who keeps comfortably to her home and ventures out only when need be . . ." (p. 167). These critics then have ammunition for the argument that women should be more traditional and perhaps return to staying primarily at home.

Women who hold the politicized view (Gardner, 1995) compare public harassment to workplace and school harassment, purport that it is evidence of men's power over women in multiple societal domains, and refuse to let women accept responsibility for the harassment. However, Gardner observed that even feminists tended to react to public harassment in traditional, self-blaming ways. She suspects this is due to neither the romanticized nor politicized rhetoric offering practical strategies for coping with harassment.

Another interesting observation made by Gardner (1995) concerns men's responses to female harassers. On the rare occasions women perpetrated public harassment towards men, the men viewed it as either positive or strange. If they viewed it positively, they considered it flattering, complimentary, proof of manhood, or approval of attractiveness. Those who viewed it as odd reported that the behavior is not typically seen in "decent" women. This sharply contrasts with women's responses to being the victim. Women tend to question their appearance, their behaviors, or their very selves when they are harassed. The men in Gardner's study did not report experiencing similar self-questioning.

Explanatory Theories

There are several theories as to why public harassment occurs. Benard and Schlaffer (1996) put forth the male-bonding theory. They report that many men, when asked why they harass, responded that harassment alleviated boredom, was "fun," and gave them a feeling of camaraderie with other men. Twenty percent said they would not harass if they were alone, which indicates that the desire for male bonding at least partially contributes to the reason men harass. Consistent with this theory, Gardner (1995) found that some men seem to harass as part of a male bonding ritual. Some men interpreted harassing behavior as playful or sportive, and gay men sometimes harassed in order to fit in. Also, according to an AAUW Educational Foundation survey (Dyer, 2005), many students who harass on-campus reportedly do so because they think it is funny, and some felt it was just part of something people do at college. However, Benard and Schlaffer also had more sinister findings. A minority of men reported that they intended to anger or humiliate their victims. Harassment can also serve as a method of selecting

rape victims, behavior that is termed “rape-testing” as men attempt to determine which women may be easy targets (Bowman, 1993).

Lenton et al. (1999) describe three additional theories of public harassment. The first is the social-structural argument. According to this argument, sexual harassment is part of a larger structure in which men and women have unequal power because men have access to more resources (physical, political, etc.) than women. This places women in a more dependent position. Society is structured such that men have more power than women, and public harassment is a reflection of this socially-structured inequality.

The sociocultural view looks at the social construction of gender and the role that gender norms and expectations play in promoting male violence against women. Gender roles place males in a superior, dominant position to females. Women are objectified, sometimes to the point of blaming themselves for the behaviors to which they are subjected. Our culture socializes men to be aggressive, dominant, and sexual, and it socializes women to be more submissive. From this perspective, male aggression towards women is eroticized or romanticized (Gardner, 1995).

The third theory is the social control theory, which holds that harassment is a “means of social control that serves to reproduce and maintain the status quo of male dominance” (Lenton et al., 1999, p. 520). Harassment forces some women out of the public sphere, which men consider their territory, and back into the private sphere. The authors believe that the results of their study, described above, suggest that harassment is likely related to the social control theory, with many women experiencing fear and limiting their activities as a result of being harassed.

All three theories demonstrate the power that men hold. They vary subtly in the arguments for why that power is expressed. Society has always had an oppressed group or

groups and oppressor(s), and from the social-structural perspective, men are the oppressors while women are the oppressed. The sociocultural argument claims that harassment is due more to cultural gender norms than to societal structure. According to the social control theory, men harass specifically so that they can maintain their power as the dominant group. Although they are put forth as separate theories, it may be that all three theories are not only valid, but also intertwined.

Additionally, it seems that men have come to view women as “open” objects. Erving Goffman described “civil inattention” (see Bowman, 1993; Gardner, 1995) as non-threatening behavior between strangers, which includes meeting then dropping a stranger’s gaze, followed by an indifferent, middle-distance look. Civil inattention is the way strangers typically behave in public. However, there are exceptions, such as when there is a noticeable similarity between passersby, in which case it is considered acceptable to comment on this similarity. An example might be two passersby realizing that they are wearing the same shirt. “Open persons” are another exception. Gardner notes that “civil inattention can lapse when the citizen is accompanied by a member of a category that allows them to be approached at will with no pretense of stranger etiquette, as, for example, a child or a dog” (p. 93). Individuals who do not meet society’s standards for what is ideal can also fall into the open person category, such as individuals with disabilities or those who are judged to be unattractive. Men have learned to treat women as open persons, which is yet another indication of the power that men hold in society; women, after all, do not in turn view men as open persons.

Effects of Public Harassment

There are multiple societal and individual effects of gender-based public harassment. On a societal level, harassment contributes to women's avoidance of certain places and certain types of men, as well as their return to the private sphere (Bowman, 1993; Gardner, 1995). In fact, Gardner found that agoraphobic and non-agoraphobic women had similar patterns of behavior and used similar strategies to cope with being in public and experiencing public harassment. Heben (1995), citing *Ms.* magazine survey results, reported that "half of the women who responded said that at least once they had not left their homes because they were afraid to go outside" (p. 204). This avoidance makes it more difficult for men and women to meet each other. Furthermore, women entered more into the public sphere because they disliked subsisting chiefly in the private realm (Friedan, 1963). It is unlikely that they will be happy being forced back into the realm they left.

Women's isolation within the private sphere may be categorized by some as Agoraphobia. However, as McHugh (2000) points out, Agoraphobia can be considered a gendered construct. The majority of individuals in the United States who have been diagnosed with Agoraphobia are female, which indicates that Agoraphobia may be linked to cultural factors, such as women's limited societal roles and girls who grow up socialized to express more fear than men. A woman diagnosed with Agoraphobia is essentially being diagnosed with an "irrational fear," but although the fear may seem irrational to men, for women it is rational. There are valid reasons to fear going into public.

Public harassment increases women's fear of men. In addition to making it more difficult for men and women to meet, this fear makes it more difficult for women to trust men, even with

relatively innocuous communication, thus forcing men to go out of their way to demonstrate their trustworthiness (Bowman, 1993). Also, Gardner (1995) believes that public harassment emphasizes and reinforces other social problems, such as women's vulnerability to sexual assault, domestic violence, pornography, and similar harassment in school and workplace settings.

Despite the potential association between public harassment and other societal concerns, public harassment rarely seems to be taken seriously. For example, in 2000, during the Puerto Rican Day parade in New York, several women in Central Park were doused with water, groped, and had men attempt to remove their clothes; yet, the multiple police officers in the vicinity had little reaction (Morris, 2000). Some of these behaviors are at the more extreme end of public harassment, and for some women it became further sexual abuse. It does not take much to cross the line from "harmless" insults to sexual violation, yet society seems to consider them very different things.

On an individual level, as described above, women may continue to be upset by the harassment long after it happens, may begin going into public with companions, and may feel less safe in various contexts. In fact, Stanko (1995) observed that although men are more often victims of crime than women, it is women who experience more fear of crime. More specifically, Stanko asserts that women's fear of crime can nearly be equated with fear of rape. Compared to the widespread fear of rape, the number of recorded rapes is relatively low, so what contributes to such fear? There are several reasons, but one of the contributors is sexual harassment. Stanko writes, "[T]he sexual harassment women receive as part of growing up female contributes to their concern about their sexual integrity" (p. 49). Women are also forced to develop strategies for coping with pervasive harassment, such as repressing the incident, changing how they dress

or what facial expressions they have at any given moment, or pretending to go along with the situation to prevent it from escalating (Gardner, 1995).

Patricia Rozee (2000) described findings congruent with those described by other researchers discussed in this paper. She writes that fear of rape is a universal fear that unites women, and such fear can prevent women from leaving their houses. In fact, fear of rape is the primary predictor of women's isolation behavior. Their fears "were most likely to result in avoidance of discretionary activities, those activities they enjoy most . . ." (p. 256). Furthermore, women are socialized from an early age to fear rape and are cautioned to avoid strange men, which is interesting considering that most women who are raped are attacked by men they know.

There is a victim-blaming aspect of both rape and public harassment. Some of the continued socialization to fear rape comes from the media and the police, who indicate that women should not be out alone at night. This seems to make it acceptable to blame a woman if she is raped. Rozee (2000) reported that on the campus where she works, a young woman was raped at knifepoint. She overheard other students saying, "What was she doing on campus alone?" "Why was she there on a Sunday?" (p. 263). Similar statements might be made to a woman who is harassed on the street: "Why didn't she have a friend with her?" or, "She shouldn't have been wearing that outfit." On a related note, Rozee writes that Brigham Young University (BYU), prompted by an on-campus attack of a female student, warned women not to walk alone on campus at night, in effect setting a curfew. Female students at BYU reacted by posting flyers all over campus that set a curfew for men. The flyers stated that men must not go out alone or in all-male groups after a certain time, and if they are out after curfew, they must be accompanied by at least two women to prove they are not threatening. It seems ridiculous, but

that is essentially what BYU wanted to do to female students. Male students, understandably, did not have a positive reaction. Rozee concludes, “The men seemed to understand restrictions of *their* rights . . .” (p. 264), implying that men did not attend to women’s rights to the same degree.

BYU is not alone in responding to violence against women in a way that essentially punishes women for men’s behavior. The Parliament of Israel once wanted to institute a curfew for women to prevent violence against them. Golda Meir, Prime Minister at that time, replied that if Parliament wanted women to be safe on the streets, it should place a curfew on men. Clearly, society has not moved past a victim-blaming stance.

In addition to making women angry, anxious, or depressed, public harassment may make women ashamed of their bodies and decrease their comfort with their sexualities (Bowman, 1993). Polce-Lynch, Myers, Kliwer, and Kilmartin (2001) noted that body image is related to self-esteem in adolescents. Similarly, Webster and Tiggemann (2003) found that body dissatisfaction was related to self-concept and self-esteem, regardless of age group. It seems reasonable to conclude that public harassment, which may affect body image, thus also affects women’s self-esteem.

Objectification and Self-Objectification

Objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) posits that the sexual objectification of women “functions to socialize girls and women to, at some level, treat *themselves* as objects to be looked at and evaluated” (p. 177), which the authors term self-objectification. Objectification “occurs whenever a woman’s body, body parts, or sexual functions are separated out from her person, reduced to the status of mere instruments, or regarded as if they were capable of representing her” (p. 175). Repeated objectification, including its frequent occurrence in the

media, leads to self-objectification, which is an internalization of women's objectification. Consistent with the authors discussed above, Fredrickson and Roberts noted that women's body image satisfaction is associated with their senses of self. This can be problematic if objectified women are viewed as unattractive. Women feel shame if they feel they do not meet cultural standards of attractiveness, and they may experience anxiety about how their bodies will be evaluated. Women also become somewhat detached from their bodies, including internal physiological states. For example, the authors reported that multiple studies have indicated that women are not as accurate as men at detecting internal cues, such as heartbeat and even sexual arousal, thus forcing them to rely to some extent on contextual stimuli. Fredrickson and Roberts also observed that objectification can affect women's mental health states, such as contributing to depression, sexual dysfunction, and eating disorders.

Both criticism and compliments can encourage self-objectification and lead to negative effects. Calogero, Herbozo, and Thompson (2009) studied the effects of "complimentary weightism." They proposed that, because both criticism and compliments direct women's attention to their bodies, both would lead to self-objectification. The authors found that women's body surveillance and body dissatisfaction were positively related to how strongly they felt about criticism and compliments. They also found that the frequency of appearance-related comments was not significantly related to body surveillance or self-objectification, but the negative and positive feelings about the comments were. There was one exception, with results indicating that body surveillance increased as the frequency of criticism increased. Additionally, body dissatisfaction was positively correlated with both criticism and compliments. The authors also

observed that both body dissatisfaction and body surveillance scores were higher in women they identified as high self-objectifiers than for low self-objectifiers.

Even the anticipation of being looked at and evaluated contributes to self-objectification. In a study of undergraduate women, Calogero (2004) predicted that women who anticipated a male gaze would have higher body shame and social physique anxiety than women who anticipated a female gaze, and results supported this hypothesis. The participants did not even have to interact with a man for these effects to occur; they simply expected that they would be interacting with a man.

There has been a substantial amount of research on objectification theory. For example, Moradi, Dirks, and Matteson (2005) studied over 200 undergraduate women to determine whether sexual objectification experiences were related to internalization of sociocultural standards of beauty, body surveillance, body shame, and eating disorder symptoms; whether the link between objectification experiences and body surveillance, body shame, and eating disorder symptoms, if there was such a link, was mediated by sociocultural standards of beauty; and whether body shame partially mediates the link between body surveillance and eating disorder symptoms. The authors found significant positive correlations between sexual objectification experiences and internalization of sociocultural standards of beauty, body surveillance, body shame, and eating disorder symptoms. Their other hypotheses (sociocultural standards of beauty and body shame as mediators) were also supported.

Greenleaf and McGreer (2006) also looked at disordered eating in college females, comparing sedentary women to physically active women. They found that regardless of activity group, women with high self-objectification reported higher body surveillance, body shame,

appearance anxiety, and disordered eating attitudes; these were all significant at the $p < .001$ level. They also found that objectification theory accounted for variance in disordered eating attitudes in both sedentary women and active women (53% and 47%, respectively). Additionally, “for both groups, body shame and appearance anxiety appeared to mediate the relationship between self-objectification, body surveillance, and disordered eating” (p. 195). This seems consistent with Moradi et al. (2005).

Disordered eating was also found to be linked to body shame and self-objectification in a study by Noll and Fredrickson (1998). The authors found that self-objectification was positively correlated with body shame and that body shame mediated the relationship between self-objectification and disordered eating. Self-objectification also accounted for a small amount of variance in disordered eating directly, without body shame as a mediator.

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) described the influence of media in promoting objectification and self-objectification of women. Roberts and Gettman (2004) conducted a study looking at exposure to objectification. Using a sample of 160 undergraduate men and women, they looked at whether exposure to sexually objectifying words was related to the negative consequences predicted by objectification theory. They primed the participants with a Scrambled Sentence Test. One group was primed with a combination of neutral words and words related to self-objectification (e.g., figure, weight, slender, desirable). The other was primed with a combination of neutral words and words related to body competence (e.g., health, stamina, coordinated, powerful). All participants then answered questionnaires about shame and disgust, appeal of sex, and appearance anxiety. The authors found that women in the self-objectification group had higher shame ratings than those in the body competence group. Regardless of

condition, women demonstrated more appearance anxiety than men, although women in the self-objectification group experienced more appearance anxiety than women in the body competence group. Finally, the authors looked at the effects of priming on the appeal of sex. They found that women reported greater appeal of the emotional aspects of sex and less appeal for the physical aspects of sex than did men. There were also differences in the appeal of the physical aspects of sex based on whether the woman was in the self-objectification or body competence group. There were no differences between men in the two conditions.

The Roberts and Gettman (2004) study was important for at least two reasons. First, it supported objectification theory and extended previous findings. Second, if subtle priming during a scrambled sentence task could lead to negative self-appraisal, it seems reasonable to conclude that the constant bombardment of objectification from the media, both subtle and blatant, must be extremely influential in how women feel about themselves. This leads into the reason behind this study. There is very little contemporary, basic research on gender-based public harassment. However, it is clear that harassment has negative individual and sociocultural consequences, including that it most likely increases self-objectification.

To conclude, research on gender-based public harassment generally demonstrates a high prevalence rate, with the amount of harassment possibly varying based on race. Several theories of why harassment occurs have been proposed. It is unclear which is the most likely reason, and they may all be relevant to some degree. Public harassment has several negative short-term and long-term effects on women and on society as a whole. There is also reason to believe that public harassment is related to avoidance behavior, given that women have reported avoiding public

places due to fear. Gender-based public harassment has been linked to body image and is likely related to self-esteem and self-objectification, as well.

Due to the limited research specifically regarding gender-based public harassment and how it is connected to the variables described above, this study is meant to be exploratory, and all hypotheses are two-tailed. It is speculated that public harassment will be related to body image, self-esteem, and avoidance; that body image will be related to self-esteem; and that public harassment will be related to self-objectification. Based on Nielsen's (2000) findings, it is also hypothesized that there will be differences based on racial identity.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 133 undergraduate women at Indiana University of Pennsylvania who were enrolled in introductory psychology courses. They were randomly selected from the department subject pool. Data from 3 participants were excluded due to incomplete questionnaires, leaving 130 usable sets of data. Ages ranged from 18 to 23 with a mean age of 18.87 (SD = .781). Approximately 77% identified as white/European-American, nearly 11% as black/African-American, 5% as bi- or multi-racial, 2% as Latina, and 1.5% as Asian. Four individuals did not endorse any racial background. The first two percentages are reflective of the university as a whole.

Measures

Gender-based Public Harassment

Women's experiences of public harassment were assessed through the use of a questionnaire specifically designed for this study. This self-report questionnaire was divided into 2 subscales. The first subscale (Harassing Experiences) assessed the frequency with which women were subjected to eight different harassing behaviors, on- or off-campus, during the 2 years prior to their study participation. Possible scores for each item ranged from 0 (never) to 4 (almost always). The second subscale (Reaction to Harassment) consisted of 5 items and used a semantic differential scale to assess how women felt about the harassment. The full questionnaire is available in Appendix A.

Body Image

Body image was assessed with the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire – Appearance Scales (MBSRQ-AS; Cash, 2000). The MBSRQ-AS is a 34-item, self-report assessment that is a shortened form of the original 69-item MBSRQ. The 34 items contain 5 subscales: Appearance Evaluation; Appearance Orientation; Overweight Preoccupation; Self-Classified Weight; and the Body Area Satisfaction Scale, which assesses satisfaction with specific body parts. The MBSRQ has been used extensively in body image research with adolescents and adults. The measure has acceptable internal consistency and stability. This questionnaire can be found in Appendix D.

The Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS; McKinley & Hyde, 1996) was also used to assess body image, as well as objectification. It is a 24-item, self-report measure with 3 subscales: Body Surveillance, Body Shame, and Control Beliefs. Some of the questions overlap with the MBSRQ-AS. The authors of the OBCS determined that the measure demonstrates construct validity. Internal consistencies ranged from .68 to .84. Test-retest reliability ranged from .73 to .79 for the three subscales. The authors further validated the Body Shame Scale as a measure of the internalization of cultural body standards. The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix E.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; Rosenberg, 1965), a 10-item self-report measure. The RSES is often used in studies measuring self-esteem. It has adequate reliability and validity (The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, n.d.). This scale can be found in Appendix F.

Avoidance Behavior

Avoidance behavior was measured with the Mobility Inventory for Agoraphobia (Chambless, Caputo, Jasin, Gracely, & Williams, 1985), a 27-item self-report measure that assesses panic attacks and avoidance behavior. Participants report how often they avoid specific situations when alone and when accompanied. The Mobility Inventory for Agoraphobia has sound psychometric properties. This measure can be found in Appendix G.

Procedure

Participants were assessed in groups of varying sizes and were given a packet containing the questionnaires. Participants signed consent forms and were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time. No identifying data was kept with the answered questionnaires. It took approximately 20 – 30 minutes for participants to complete the questionnaires. Upon completion, participants received an informational debriefing sheet and were informed that they can contact the experimenter with questions. No participants withdrew from the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Descriptive Results for All Measures

Reliability analyses were performed on the Harassing Experiences and Reaction to Harassment subscales of the harassment questionnaire, as this is the first time this questionnaire has been used. Cronbach's Alpha for the 8-item Harassing Experiences subscale was .807. For the 5-item Reaction to Harassment subscale, it was .795. These results indicate that the scales have acceptable to good internal consistency.

Tables 1 and 2 record the frequency with which each harassing behavior occurred for the Harassing Experiences subscale. Table 1 indicates the number of people who answered anything except 0 on each question. Table 2 reports the mean and standard deviation for each question. Scores ranged from 0 to 4, where 0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, and 4 = almost always.

Table 1: *Frequency of Non-zero Answers for Each Item on the Harassing Experiences Subscale*

Item	# Participants who scored more than 0*
Stared at in a way that made them feel uncomfortable	129 (99%)
Non-verbal sounds (e.g., whistling)	121 (93%)
Gestures that made them feel uncomfortable (e.g. pantomiming a sex act)	88 (68%)
Indecent exposure by men (e.g., exposing genitals or buttocks)	55 (42%)
Comment on appearance	120 (92%)
Vulgar, offensive, or insulting remarks	89 (68%)
Followed by an unknown man	64 (49%)
Unwanted touching by a man	91 (70%)

* Each item is out of 130 participants

Except for one woman, all participants had experienced being looked at in a way that made them feel uncomfortable. All women reported experiencing at least two forms of harassing

behaviors. The behaviors occurred both on- and off-campus but occurred more often off-campus. The location of harassment was scored the same way the Harassing Experiences subscale was, where 0 = never, 1 = rarely, 2 = sometimes, 3 = often, and 4 = almost always. Approximately 13% of participants responded that harassment occurred on-campus “often” or “almost always,” while approximately 24% of respondents reported that harassment occurred off-campus “often” or “almost always.”

Participants were asked to provide examples of harassing behaviors they experienced. Some of the more common examples were whistling, following (on foot or in a car), purposeful and “accidental” touching, staring, and horn honking. Several participants reported that unwanted touching came from patrons at their places of employment, particularly if they worked as restaurant servers. Participants also specified that unwanted touching frequently occurs at parties. Some participants gave examples of escalation, in which men would resort to name-calling if other comments were ignored. A more complete list of responses can be found in Appendix B.

Table 3 records the items from the Reaction to Harassment subscale. This subscale uses a semantic differential scale, and the two ends of each scale are listed. Possible scores for each item ranged from 1 to 7, with higher scores indicating more negative feelings. A score of 4 is neutral; the participant felt neither one way nor the other. For four items on this subscale, the means were close to neutral and weighted slightly more towards the negative end. The peaceful-angry differential had the least neutral mean (5.28), with women generally reporting feeling more angry than peaceful.

Prior to filling out the Reaction to Harassment subscale, participants were asked to describe how they felt about being harassed. Common responses included feeling uncomfortable, awkward, nervous, scared, frustrated, annoyed, angry, embarrassed, violated, and disrespected. Some reported feeling like an object. Many participants stated that they “brush it off,” “blow it off,” or ignore it when they are harassed, or in other ways minimize the behavior. Several participants expressed uncertainty over how to respond to the harassment. A more complete list of responses can be found in Appendix C.

Table 2: *Mean and Standard Deviation for Each Item on the Harassing Experiences Subscale*

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Stared at in a way that made them feel uncomfortable	2.04	.78
Non-verbal sounds (e.g., whistling)	1.77	.90
Gestures that made them feel uncomfortable (e.g. pantomiming a sex act)	1.02	.92
Indecent exposure by men (e.g., exposing genitals or buttocks)	.56	.77
Comment on appearance	2.36	1.06
Vulgar, offensive, or insulting remarks	1.25	1.13
Followed by an unknown man	.63	.74
Unwanted touching by a man	1.12	.96

Table 3: *Mean and Standard Deviation for Each Item on the Reaction to Harassment Subscale*

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
calm – worried	4.74	1.18
fearless – fearful	4.56	1.45
peaceful – angry	5.28	1.34
unconcerned about looks – concerned about looks	4.63	1.49
flattered – insulted	4.83	1.42

The charts on pages 33 - 47 display responses to the Harassing Experiences and Reaction to Harassment subscales. Figures 1 and 2 chart the total scores for each subscale. The remaining

charts display responses to each individual question. Table 4 displays the descriptive data for all measures, including normative data and internal consistency.

Based on the responses of the present study's participants, the internal consistency of each measure is acceptable to good. In general, means and standard deviations of participants were consistent with normative data. However, for the Objectified Body Consciousness Control Beliefs subscale and the Mobility Inventory for Agoraphobia – Avoidance Alone subscale, participants in the present study had much higher means than the norm. The Control Beliefs subscale mean was .92 points higher than the normative data for that scale. The Avoidance Alone mean was .85 points higher than the normative data. The Objectified Body Consciousness Scale was normed on undergraduate women, and it may be that the university population for the present study is different than the university population from which the normative means were obtained. The Mobility Inventory was normed on a community sample, and the difference between the normative mean and the sample mean may also be due to populations being different.

Correlations were used to assess the relationship of gender-based public harassment to the other variables. All tests were 2-tailed. First the correlation between the Harassing Experiences and the Reaction to Harassment subscales of the harassment questionnaire was measured. The relationship was significant ($r = .269, p < .01$), indicating that the more harassment a woman experiences, the more negatively she is likely to report feeling about it.

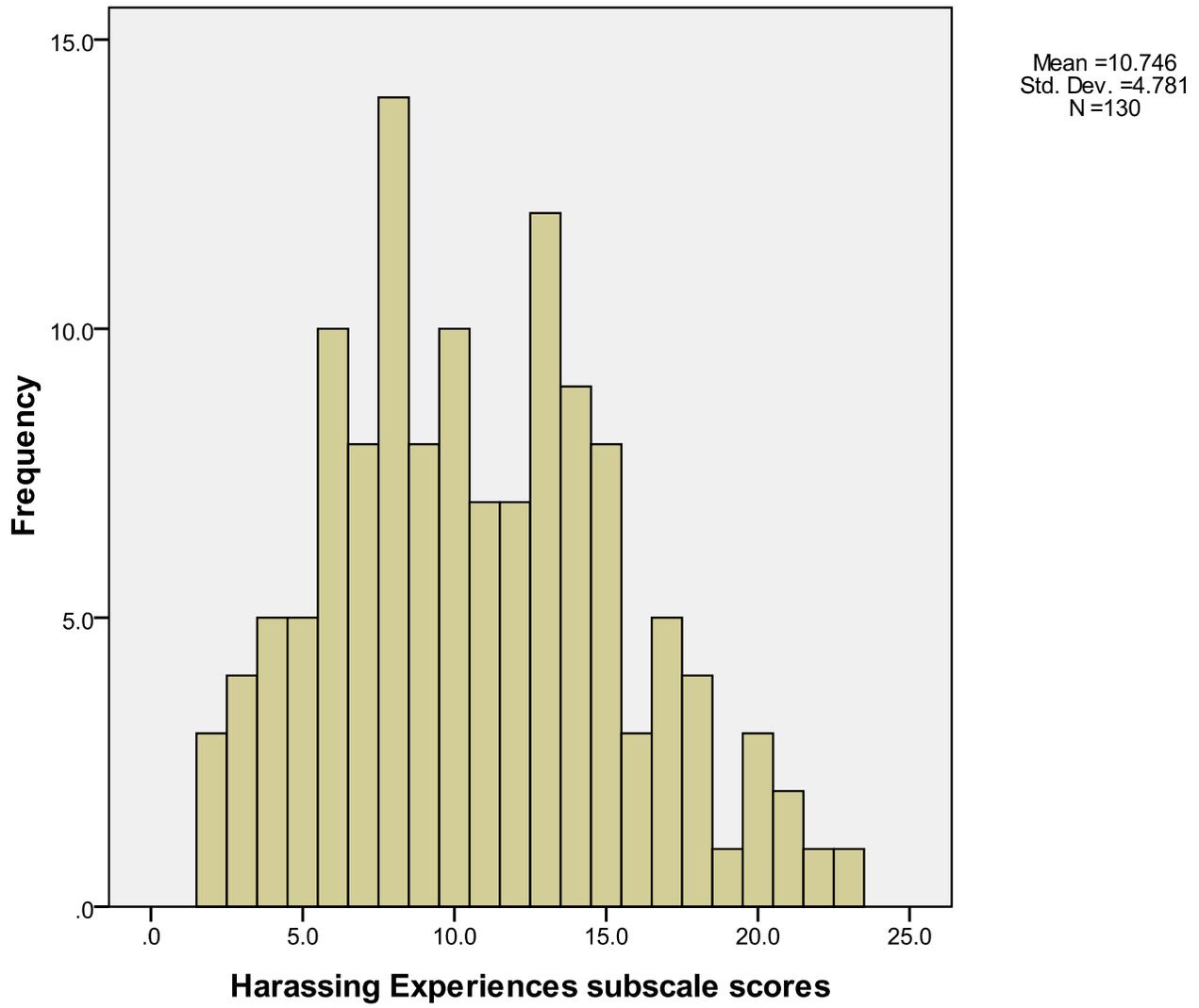


Figure 1: Totaled harassing experiences subscale scores.

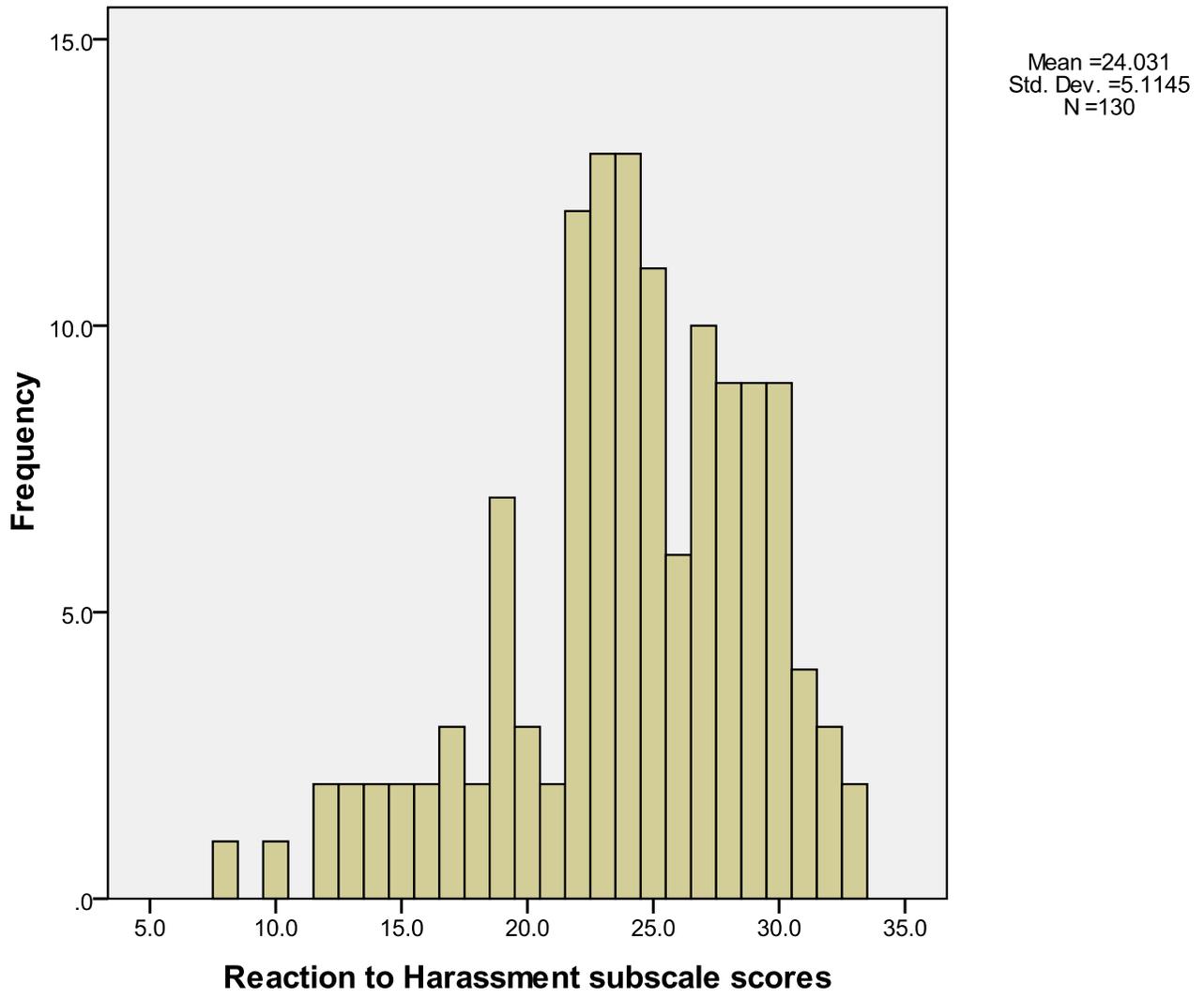


Figure 2: Totaled reaction to harassment subscale scores.

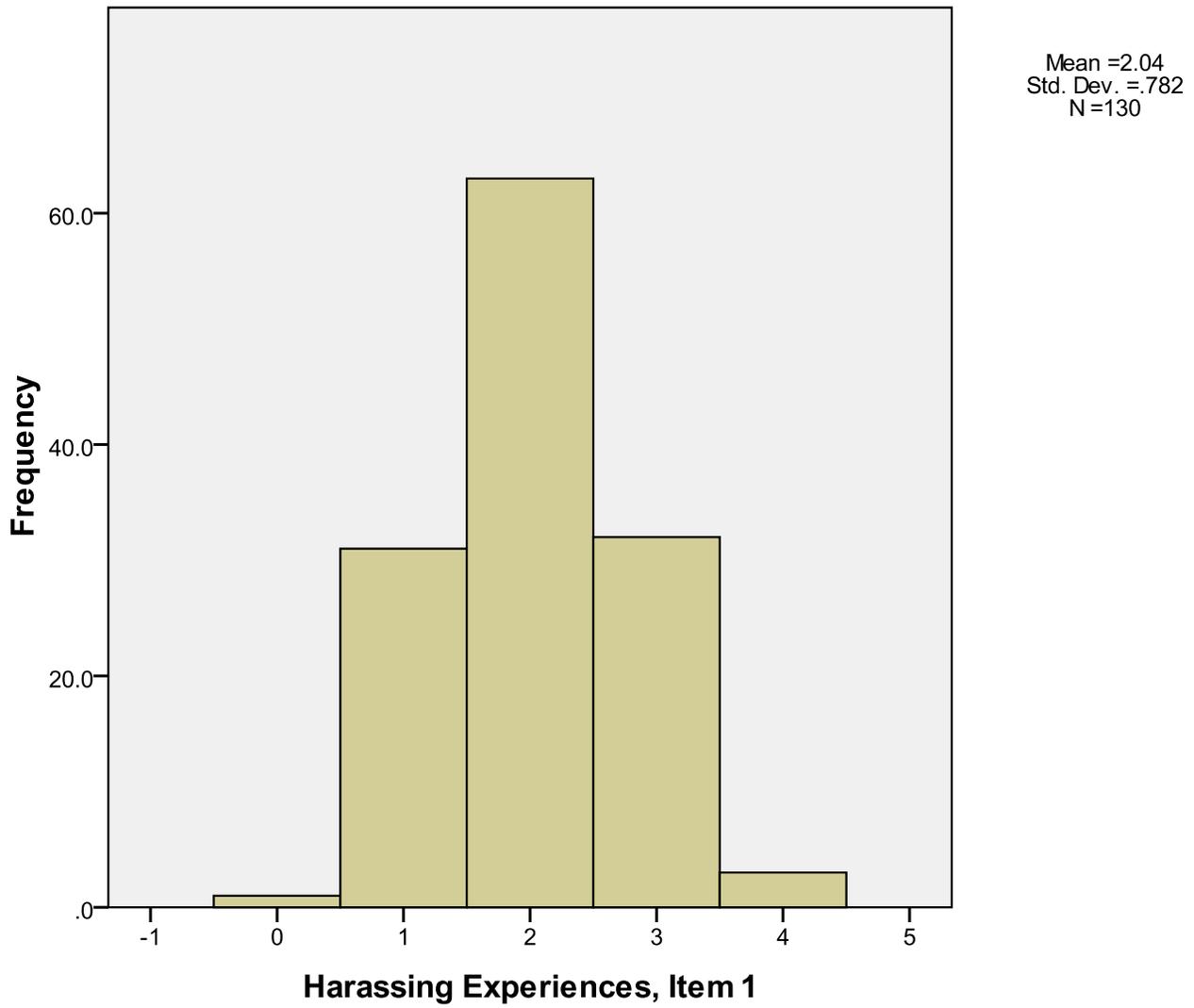


Figure 3: Scores for harassing experiences, item 1 – being stared at in a way that made them feel uncomfortable.

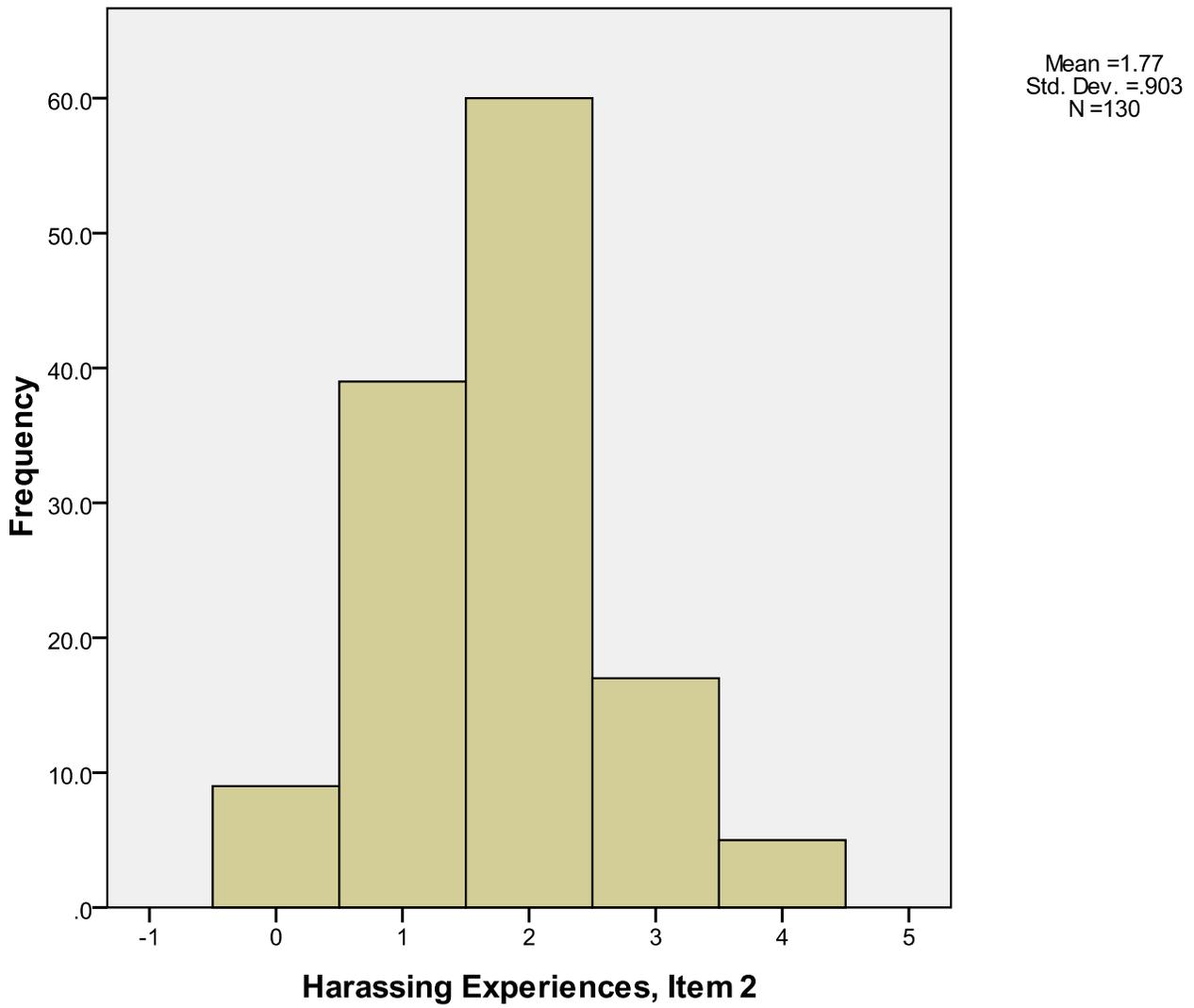


Figure 4: Scores for harassing experiences, item 2 – non-verbal sounds.

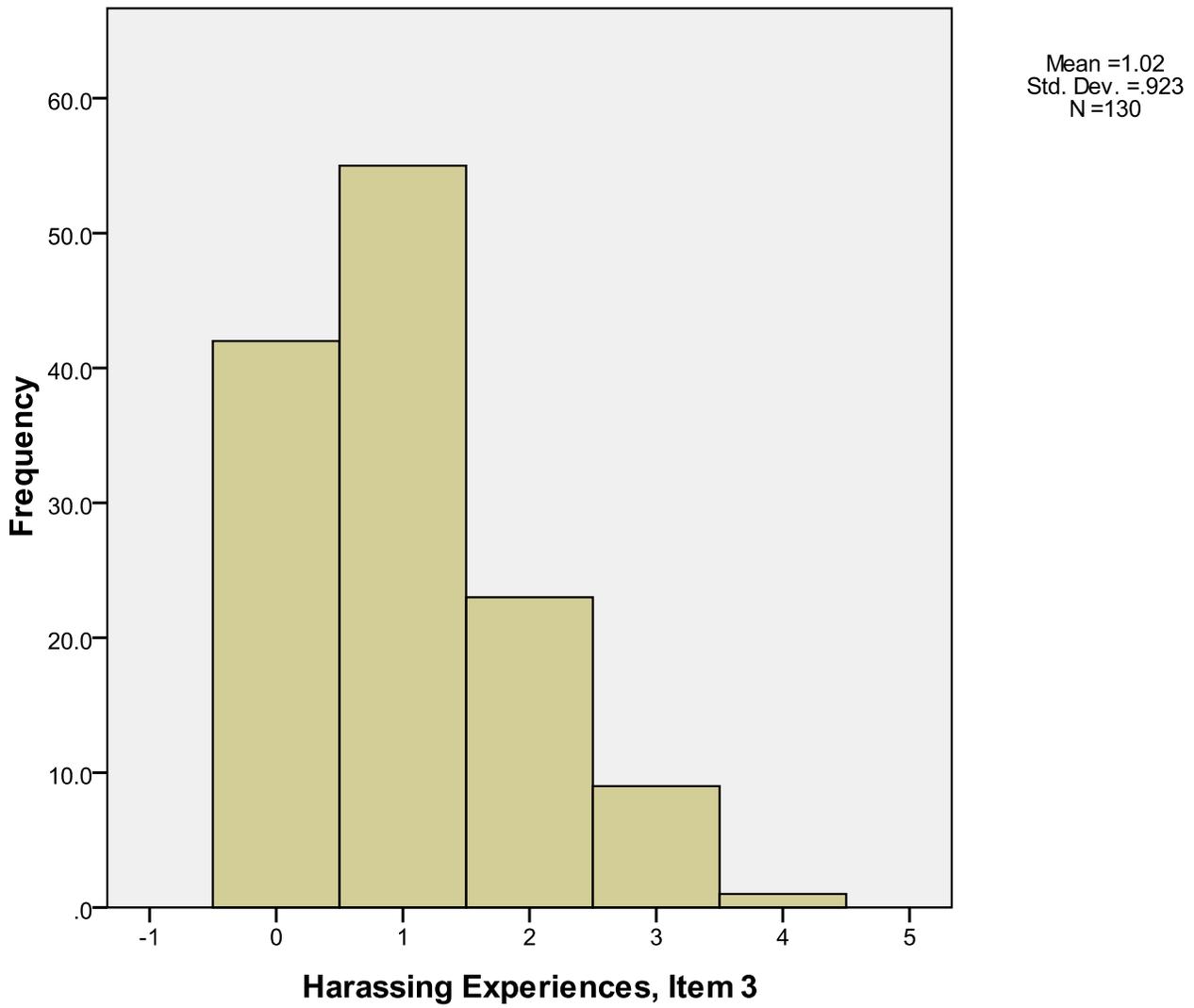


Figure 5: Scores for harassing experiences, item 3 – gestures that made them feel uncomfortable.

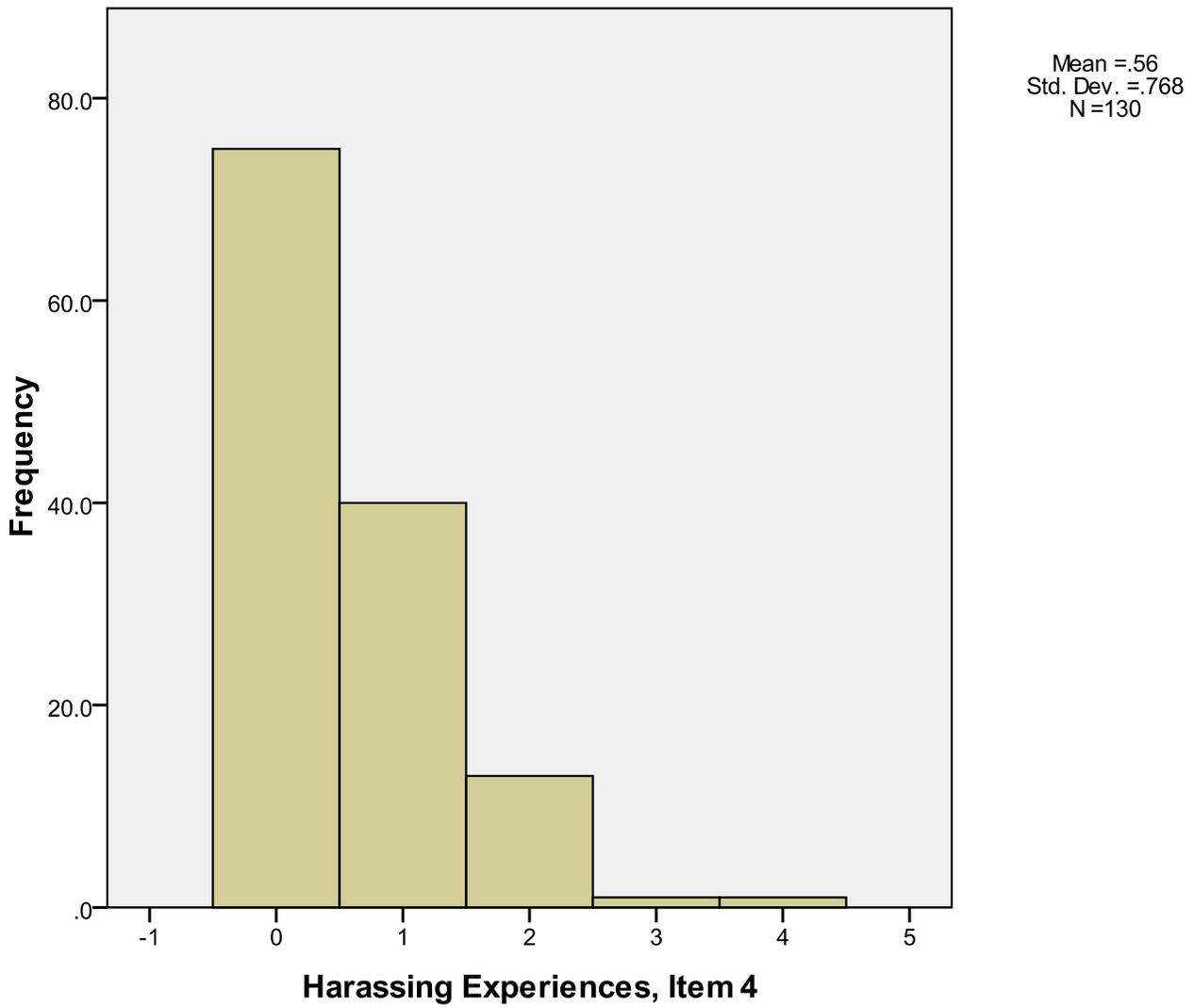


Figure 6: Scores for harassing experiences, item 4 – indecent exposure by men.

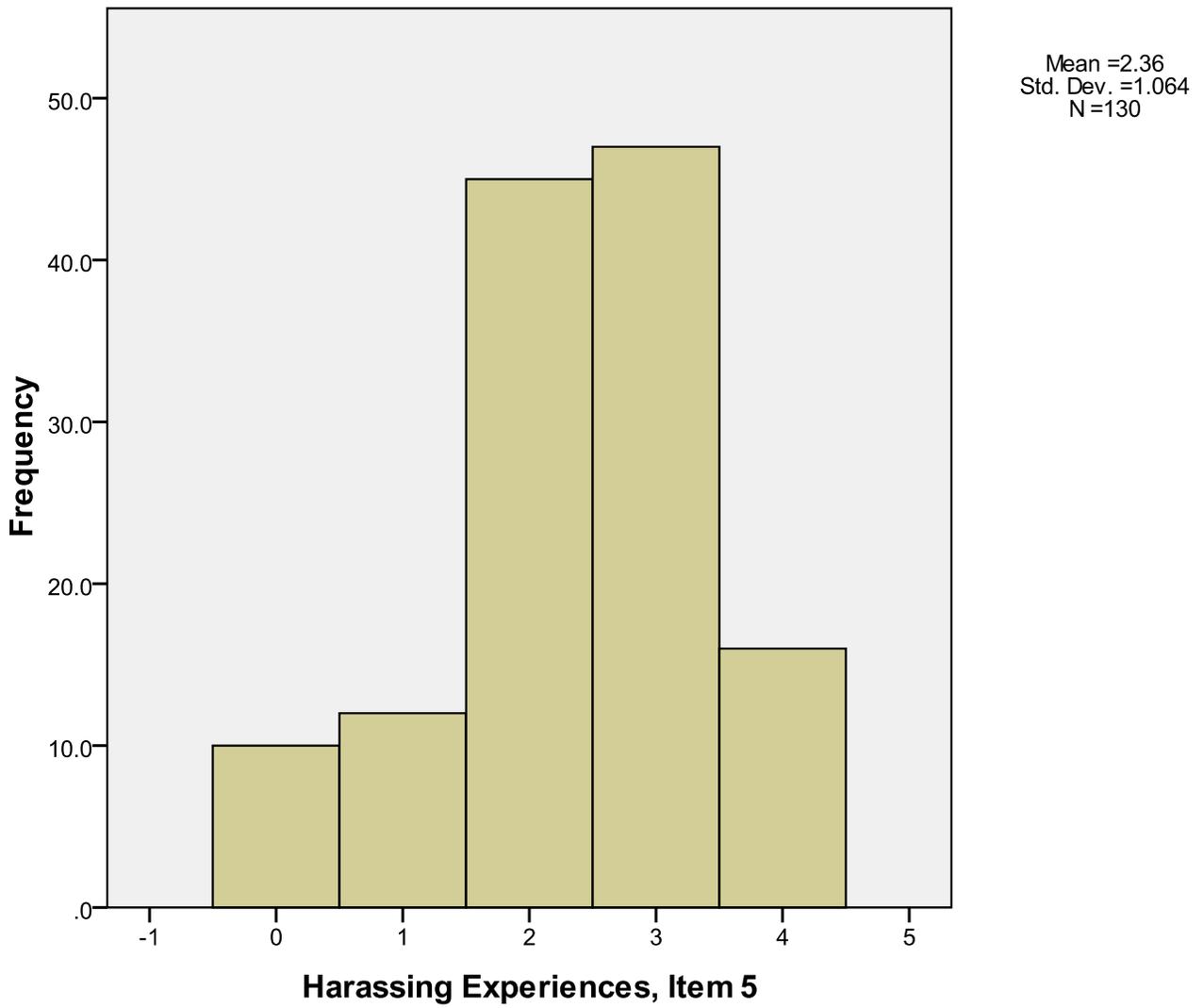


Figure 7: Scores for harassing experiences, item 5 – comment on appearance.

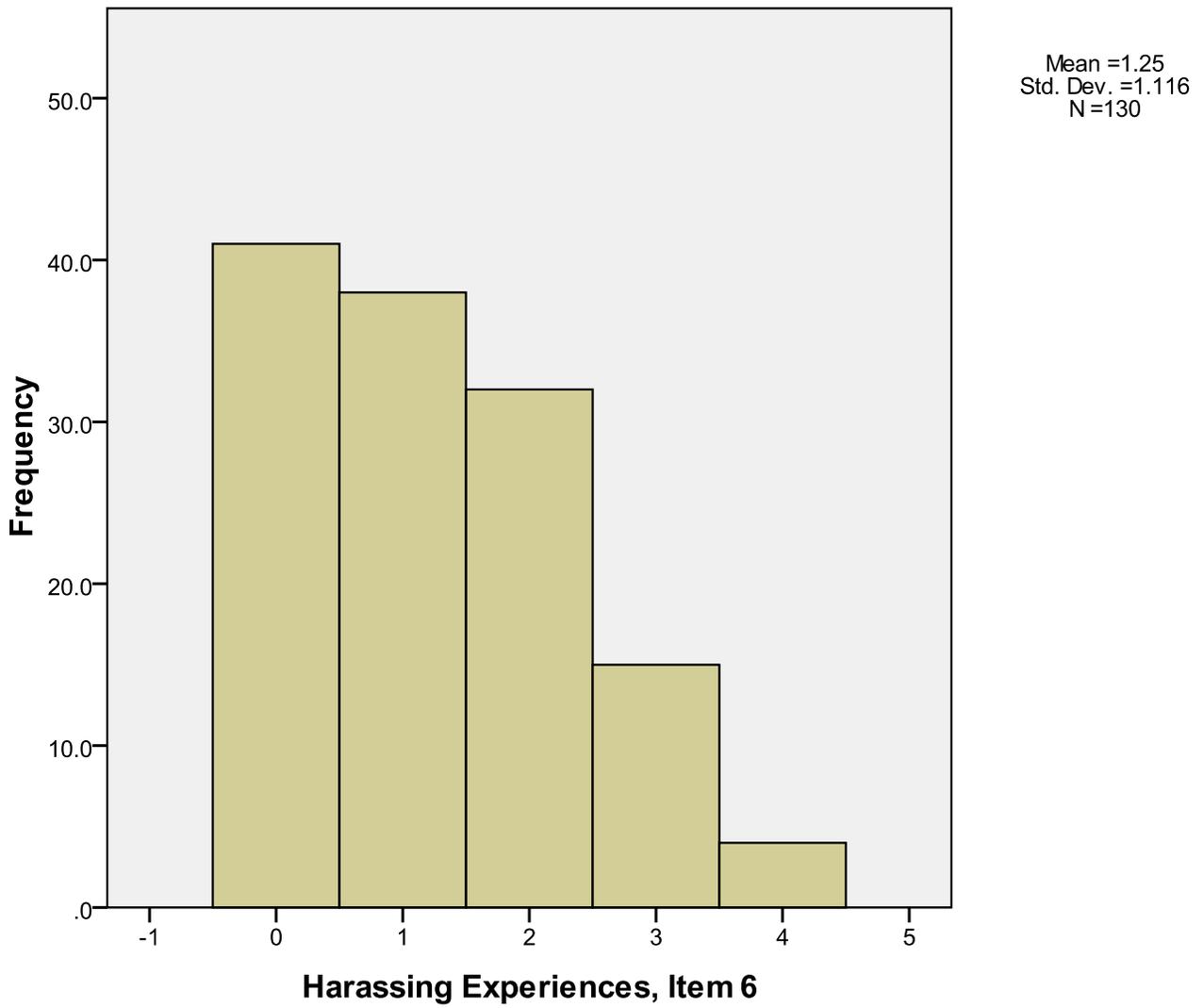


Figure 8: Scores for harassing experiences, item 6 – vulgar, offensive, or insulting remarks.

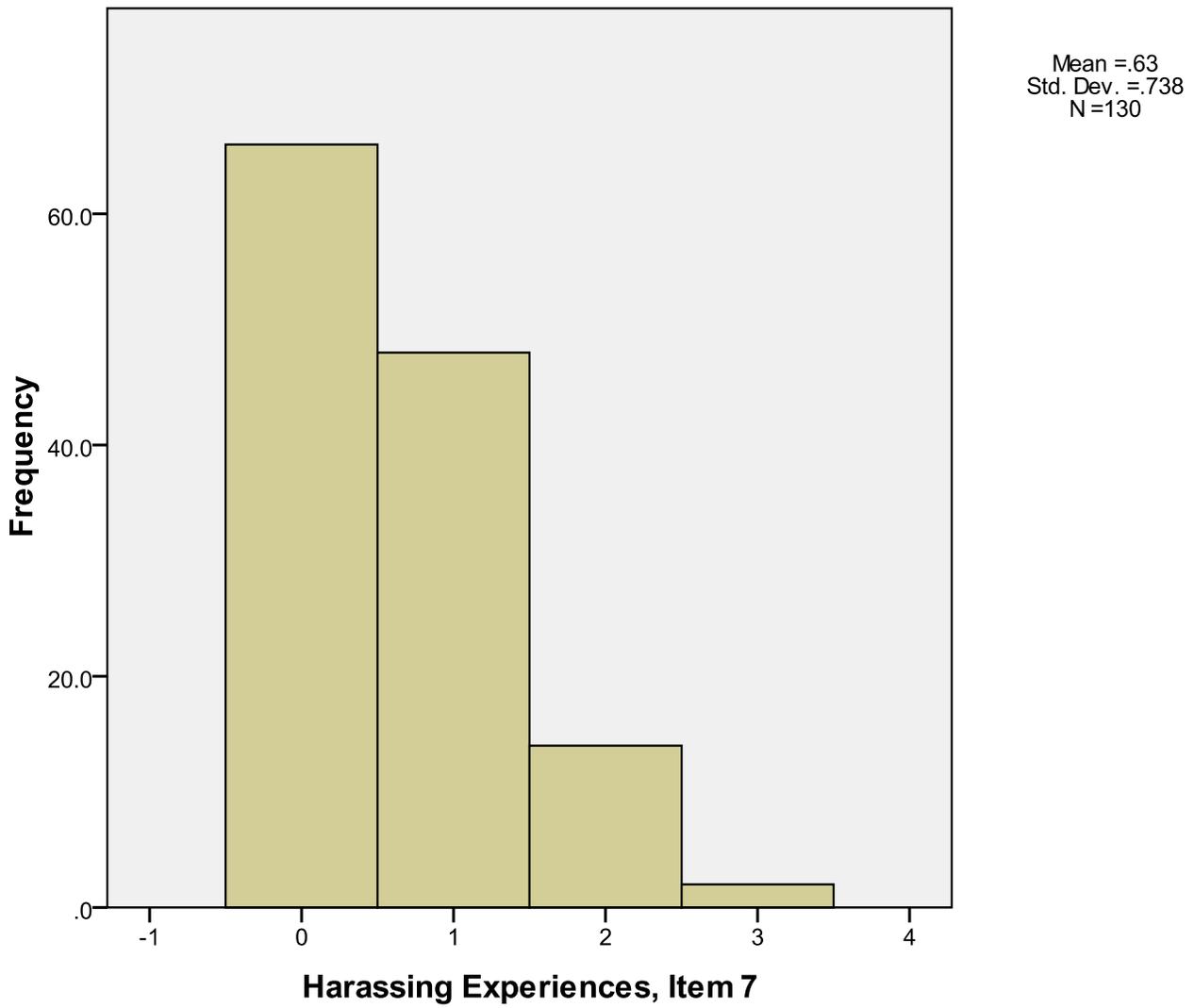


Figure 9: Scores for harassing experiences, item 7 – followed by an unknown man.

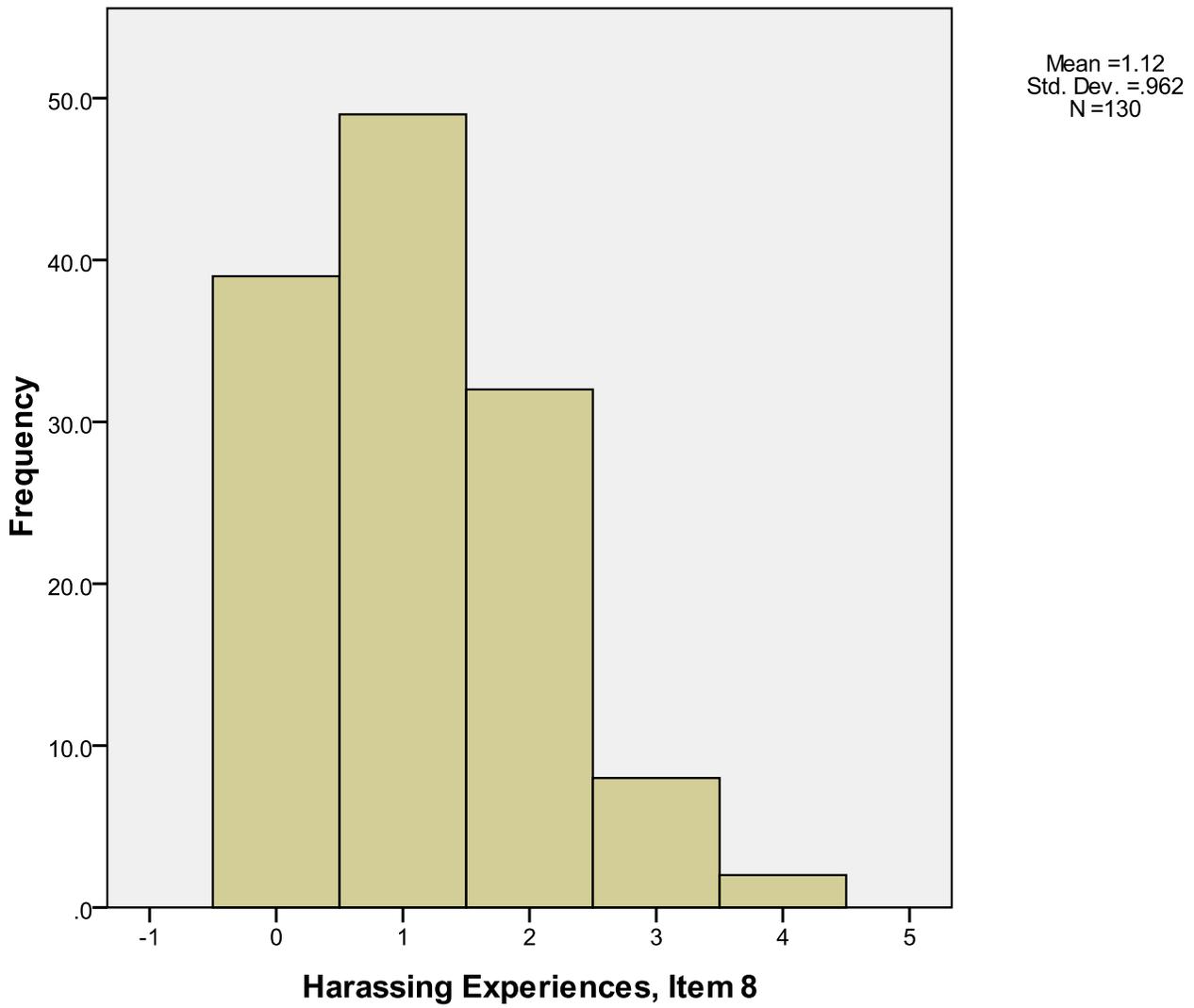


Figure 10: Scores for harassing experiences, item 8 – unwanted touching by a man.

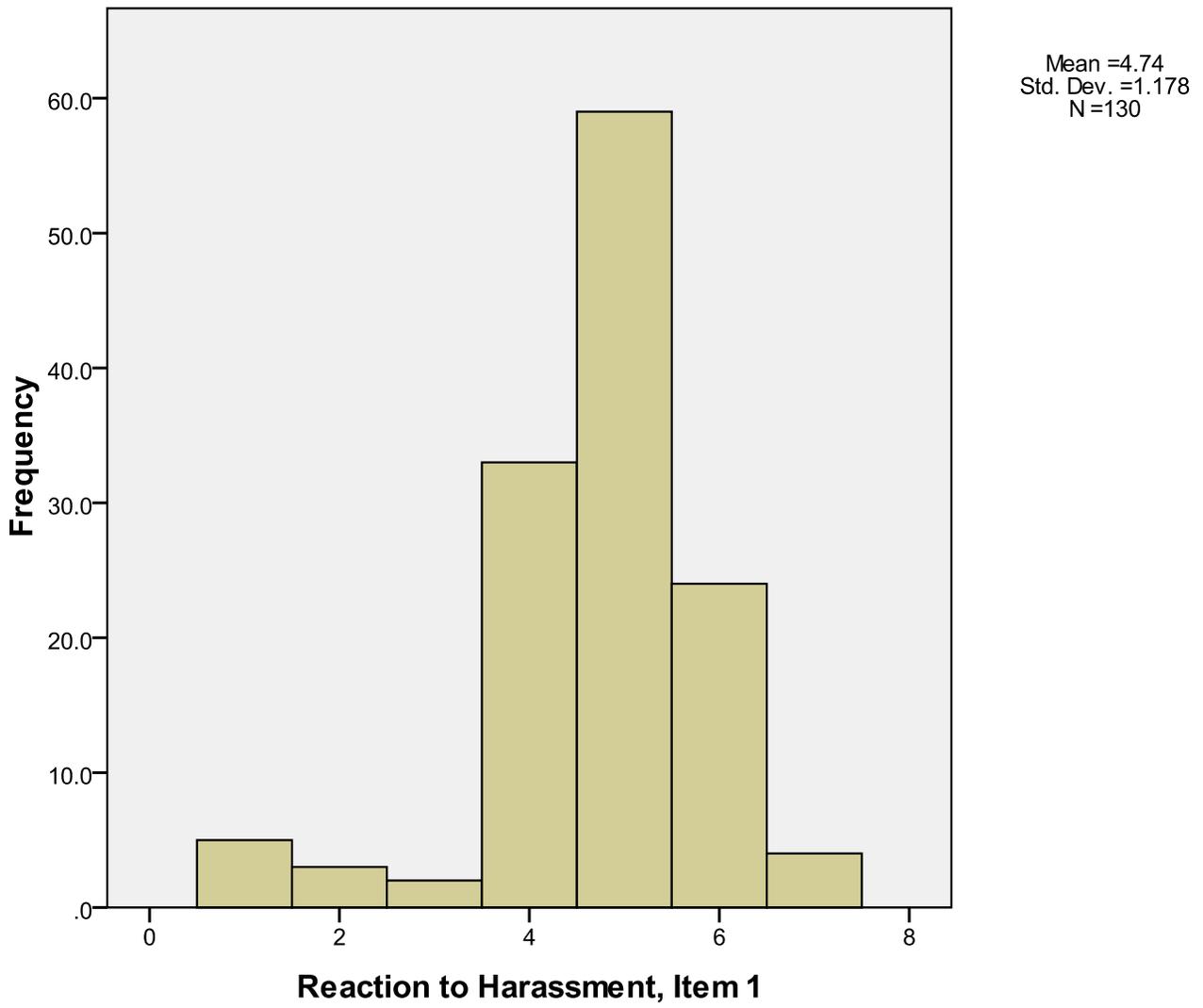


Figure 11: Scores for reaction to harassment, item 1 – calm-worried differential.

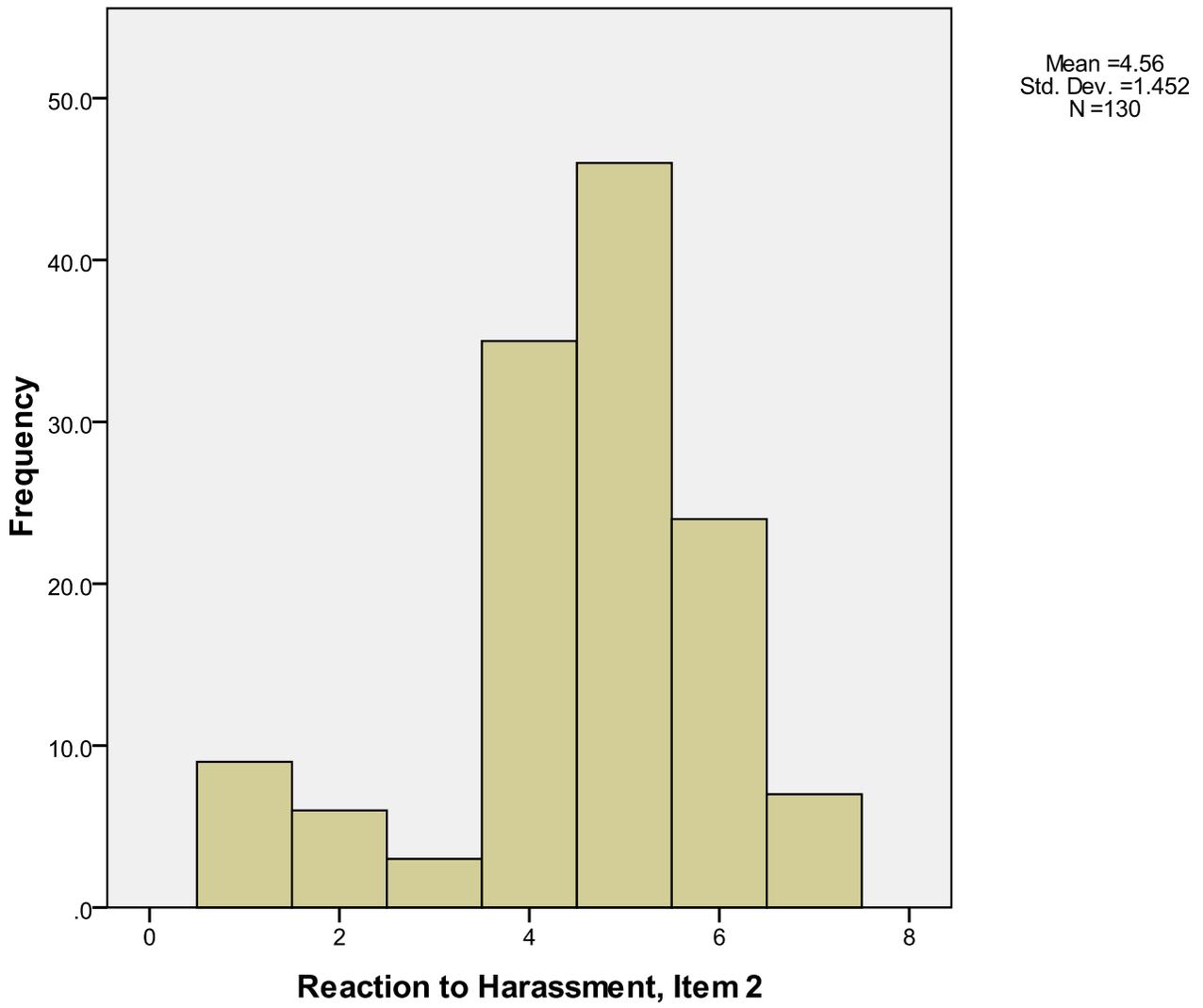


Figure 12: Scores for reaction to harassment, item 2 – fearless-fearful differential.

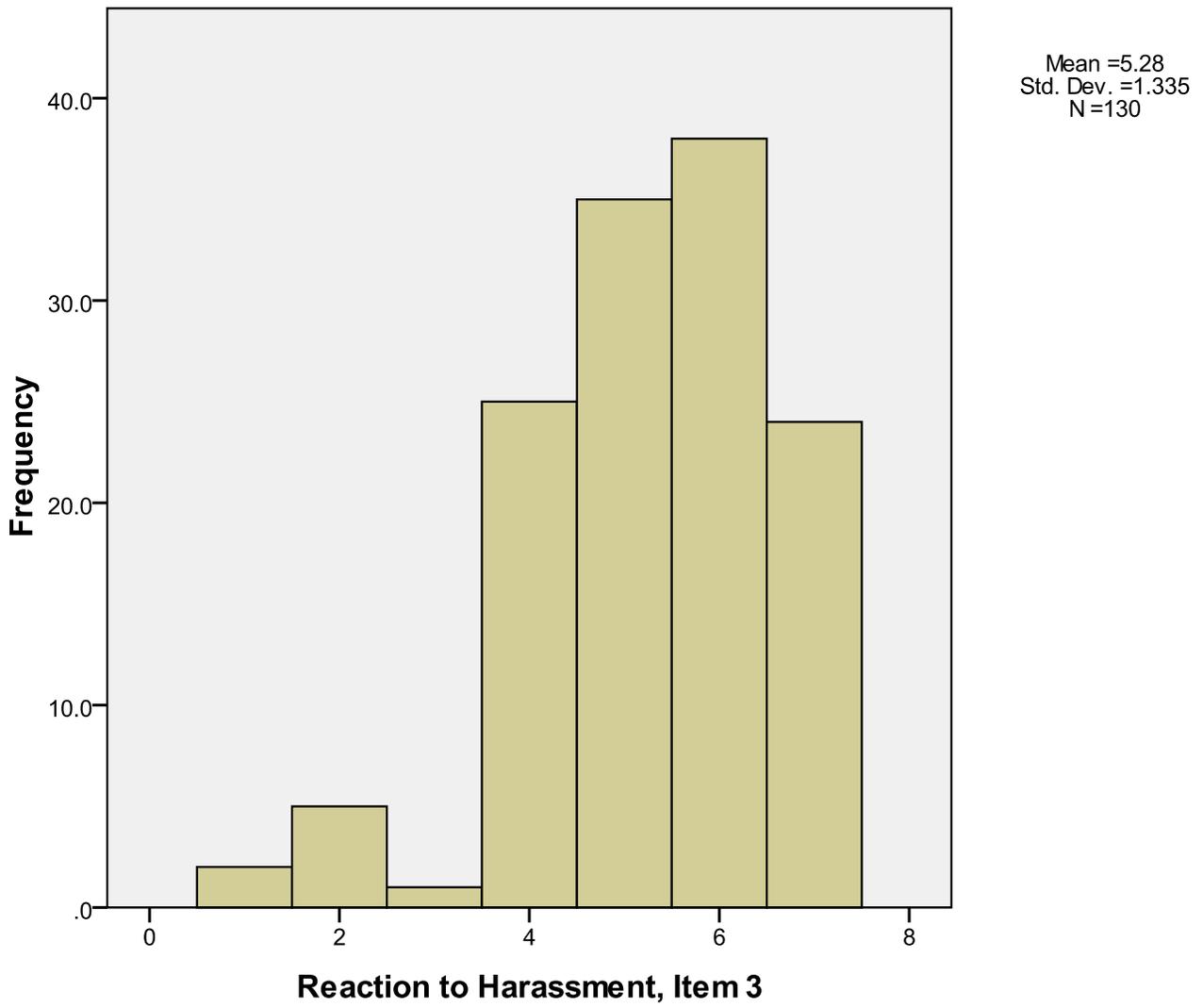


Figure 13: Scores for reaction to harassment, item 3 – peaceful-angry differential.

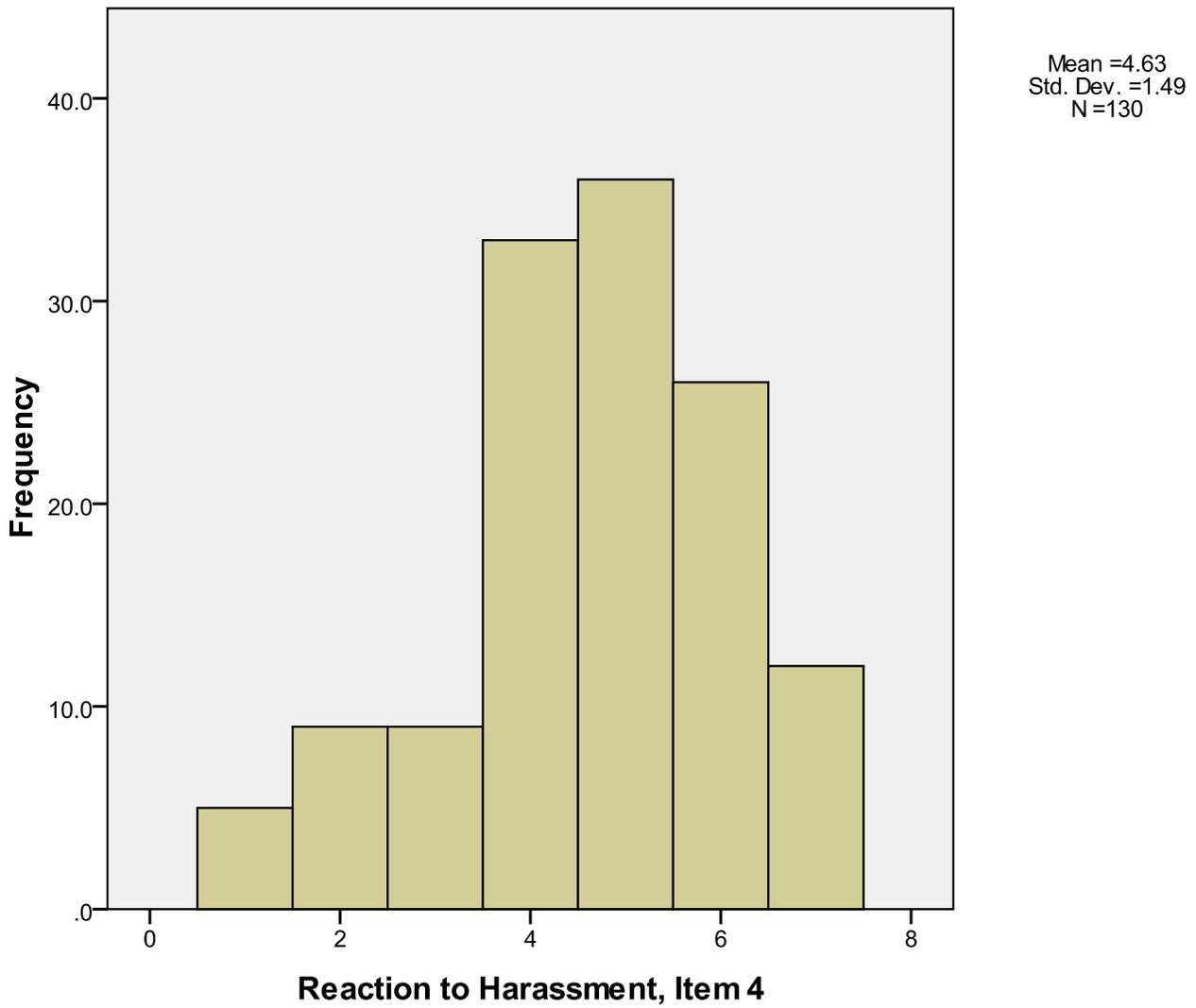


Figure 14: Scores for reaction to harassment, item 4 – unconcerned about looks-concerned about looks differential.

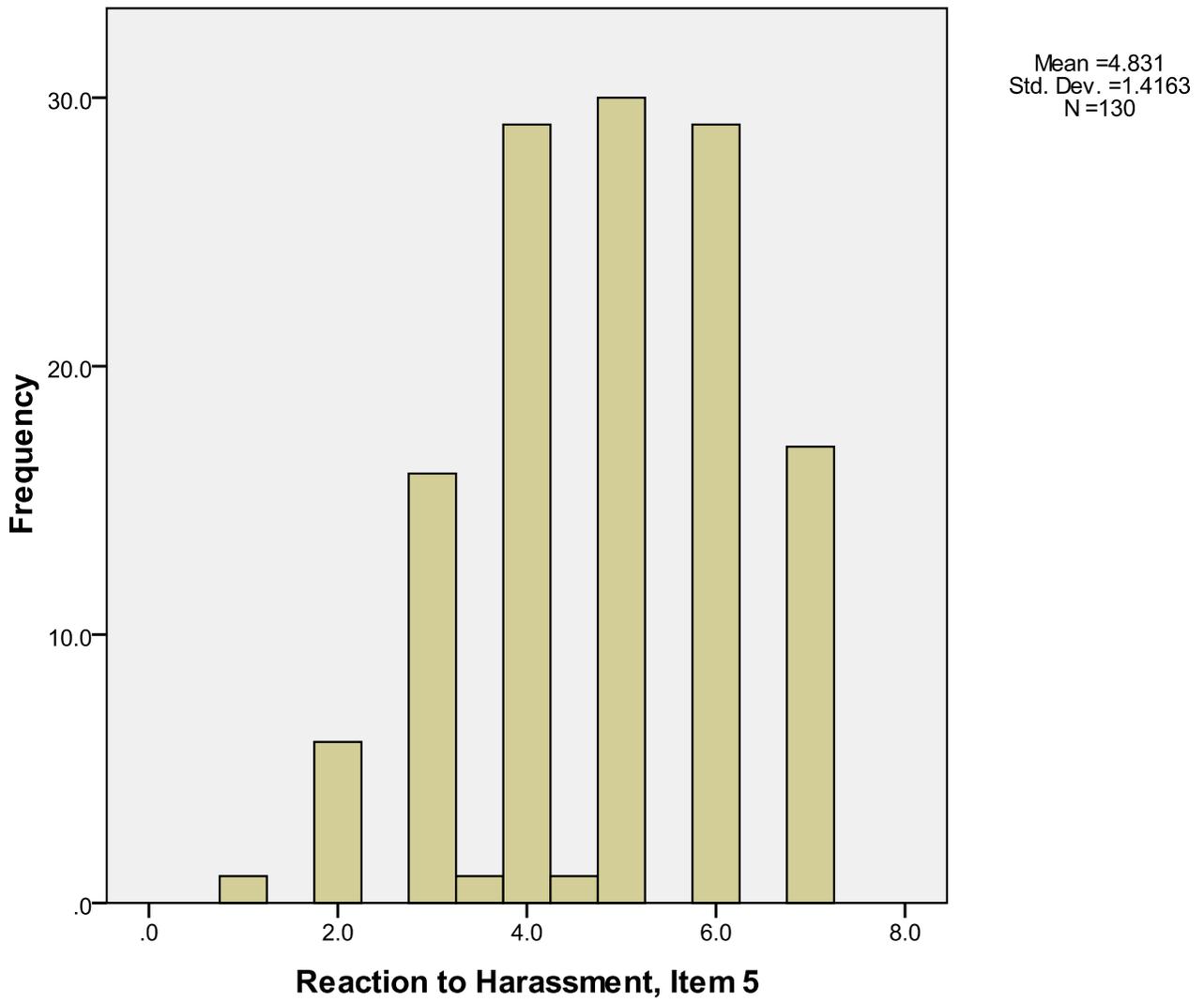


Figure 15: Scores for reaction to harassment, item 5 – flattered-insulted differential.

Table 4: *Descriptive and Normative Data for All Measures*

Measure	Range	Mean	Standard Deviation	Normative Mean	Normative Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha for present study
Harassment Questionnaire						
Harassing Experiences	2.0 – 23.0	10.75	4.78	N/A	N/A	.807
Reaction to Harassment	8.0 – 33.0	24.03	5.11	N/A	N/A	.795
Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale	17.0 – 40.0	31.69	5.13	Unknown	Unknown	.884
Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire						
Appearance Evaluation	1.29 – 5.0	3.41	.81	3.36*	.87*	.883
Appearance Orientation	2.08 – 4.92	3.71	.60	3.91*	.60*	.818
Body Areas Satisfaction	1.22 – 4.89	3.27	.69	3.23*	.74*	.818
Overweight Preoccupation	1.0 – 5.0	2.79	1.0	3.03*	.96*	.795
Self-Classified Weight	1.5 – 5.0	3.23	.60	3.57*	.73*	.784
Objectified Body Consciousness Scale						
Surveillance	2.25 – 7.0	4.79	.95	4.22**	.91**	.762
Body Shame	1.0 – 6.75	3.15	1.25	3.25**	1.04**	.848
Control Beliefs	1.88 – 6.88	4.85	1.0	3.93**	.70**	.777
Mobility Inventory for Agoraphobia						
Avoidance Alone	1 – 4	2.35	.66	1.5***	.45***	.882
Avoidance Accompanied	1 - 5	1.36	.50	1.24***	.35***	.927

*norms for adult females
Chambless, n.d.)

**norms for undergraduate women

***from a community sample (Bibb, 1988, as cited in

Significant Results for the Harassing Experiences Subscale

The Harassing Experiences subscale was significantly correlated with the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire Appearance Evaluation subscale ($r = .192$, $p < .05$), indicating that a high frequency of harassing behavior is associated with women having positive feelings about their appearance. The Harassing Experiences subscale was not significantly correlated with any other measures.

Significant Results for the Reaction to Harassment Subscale

The Reaction to Harassment subscale was significantly correlated with several variables. It was significantly correlated with the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$), indicating that more negative emotional responses to harassment are associated with lower self-esteem.

The correlation between the Reaction to Harassment subscale and the Objectified Body Consciousness Body Shame subscale was significant ($r = .219$, $p < .05$), indicating that the more negatively women report feeling about being harassed, the worse they report feeling about not meeting cultural expectations for how their bodies should look.

The significant correlation between the Reaction to Harassment subscale and the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire – Body Areas Satisfaction subscale ($r = -.221$, $p < .05$) indicates that the more negatively a woman reports feeling about being harassed, the more likely she is to report being unhappy with her appearance or certain aspects of her appearance. The Reaction to Harassment subscale was correlated with the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire – Appearance Evaluation subscale ($r = -.173$, $p < .05$), indicating the more negative the feelings were, the unhappier women tended to be with their

general appearance. The Reaction to Harassment subscale was also correlated with the Overweight Preoccupation subscale ($r = .204, p < .05$), which signifies that negative feelings about harassment are associated with fat anxiety, weight vigilance, dieting behavior, and/or restricted eating.

Finally, the Reaction to Harassment subscale was significantly correlated with the Mobility Inventory – Avoidance Alone subscale ($r = .223, p < .05$). This indicates that the more negatively women reported feeling, the more likely they were to report that they avoid going places alone.

Significant Self-Esteem and Body Image Results

As expected, body image was related to self-esteem. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was significantly correlated with 4 of the 5 Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire subscales. It was correlated with the Appearance Evaluation subscale ($r = .645, p = .000$), Body Areas Dissatisfaction subscale ($r = .647, p = .000$), Overweight Preoccupation subscale ($r = -.552, p = .000$), and Self-Classified Weight subscale ($r = -.207, p < .05$). Based on these results, participants who endorse high self-esteem are also likely to endorse positive feelings about their appearance and satisfaction with most areas of their bodies. Those who endorse lower self-esteem are more likely to report being focused on weight and perceiving themselves as overweight. The self-esteem score accounts for a substantial amount of variance in the first three variables, as well.

Racial Differences

A two-tailed *t*-test was used to compare harassment of white women and women of color. On the Harassing Experiences subscale, the mean for white women was 10.31 (SD = 4.71), and

the mean for women of color was 13.00 (SD = 4.41). The results were significant ($t = -2.63$, $p = .01$), indicating that women of color are harassed more frequently than white women.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Overview

The purpose of this study was to explore how gender-based public harassment relates to body image, self-esteem, avoidance behavior, and objectification, with the hope that these results will fill in some of the gaps in the public harassment literature. As expected, harassment was significantly related to self-esteem, avoidance behavior, and at least one subscale each on the measures assessing body image and objectification.

One of the most interesting results was that women's emotional reactions to being harassed were more predictive of the other variables than the frequency of harassment. In light of the research by Calogero et al. (2009), these results make sense. The authors found that how strongly women felt about positive or negative criticism was, for the most part, more predictive of body dissatisfaction and objectification than the frequency of appearance-related comments. The present study expands on their results with the finding that emotional reaction to a number of behaviors other than appearance-related remarks was more predictive of other variables than the frequency of these behaviors. The exception was that the Harassing Experiences subscale had a slightly stronger correlation to the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire – Appearance Evaluation subscale than the Reaction to Harassment subscale did. This somewhat surprising result indicates that the more frequently women reported being subjected to harassing behavior, the more likely they were to report feeling satisfied with their appearance. It may be that women feel satisfied with their appearance because they are attractive, and attractive women may elicit more harassment. Another possible explanation is that women who are harassed more

frequently believe that they are harassed because they are attractive, leading them to feel more content with their bodies. Given that even positive appearance comments are associated with body dissatisfaction, the first explanation seems much more likely.

The Reaction to Harassment subscale was significantly correlated with 3 of the 5 subscales of the Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire, indicating a significant link between body image and emotional response to gender-based public harassment. In general, women who reported negative feelings about being harassed tended to report feeling unhappier about aspects of their appearance and feeling generally unhappy with their overall appearance. They were also more likely to report preoccupation with their weight or with dieting behavior.

Of the 3 Objectified Body Consciousness subscale scores, Body Shame was the one that was significantly related to the Reaction to Harassment subscale, which signifies that the more negatively women feel about being harassed, the more likely they are to report feeling that they are “bad” people for not meeting cultural expectations for how their bodies should appear. Given that the creators of the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (McKinley & Hyde, 1996) validated the Body Shame subscale as a measure of the internalization of cultural body standards, this result in particular demonstrates a connection with self-objectification. Although Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) observed that frequent objectification leads to self-objectification, subsequent studies have looked at other facets of objectification, including emotional reaction, and the present study supports that frequency of objectifying behaviors alone may not be the primary predictor of self-objectification.

An interesting, though unsurprising, result was that emotional reaction to being harassed appears to be associated with avoidance behavior. The more negatively women felt about being

harassed, the more likely they were to avoid going places alone. This result lends support to McHugh's (2000) assertion that Agoraphobia is a gendered construct, and it seems consistent with Gardner's (1995) finding that agoraphobic and non-agoraphobic women exhibit similar patterns of behavior.

Women who endorsed more negative feelings about being harassed also tended to report lower self-esteem. However, self-esteem itself was more highly correlated with body image and objectification than harassment was.

An unsurprising, though discouraging, result was that women of color reported experiencing significantly more harassment than white women. This result is consistent with Nielsen's (2000) research, which indicated that women of color are subjected to more harassing comments than white women. The present study expands Nielsen's research; in addition to harassing comments, women of color are more frequently subjected to other harassing behaviors than are white women.

Contributions of the Present Study

A particularly important contribution of this study is that this is the first time that a measure has been created to specifically address only gender-based public harassment, including both behaviors experienced and the reactions to these experiences. After revision, this may be a useful measure to use in other research. Another contribution of the present study is that, although avoidance behavior has been discussed by other authors (e.g., Gardner, 1995), this study makes clear the link between harassment and avoidance. Of all the correlations, the relationship between the Reaction to Harassment subscale and the Mobility Inventory for Agoraphobia – Avoidance Alone subscale had the second highest correlation after self-esteem.

Other research has not looked at avoidance behavior in this way. It is variable that is missing from objectification literature. Swim et al. (2001) looked at some of the associations with everyday sexism, and they also neglected to explore whether avoidance is related to daily sexist incidents.

The current study clearly illustrates the prevalence of public harassment. It is remarkable that 100% of participants had experienced at least two forms of harassment in the 2 years prior to their participation, and many of them had experienced at least three forms of harassment. All of the harassing behaviors, even the most severe, had been experienced by over one-third of the participants. Additionally, results indicate that women of color are subjected to more harassment than white women, demonstrating the need to explore the intersection of racism and sexism, as well as exploring more about who the harassers are and how closely the harasser's race is associated with the victim's race.

Many of the results were consistent with or provide support for other research. The relationship between the Reaction to Harassment subscale and the Body Areas Satisfaction subscale is consistent Calogero and colleagues' (2009) findings that strong feelings about appearance comments were associated with higher body dissatisfaction. The correlation between Reaction to Harassment and Mobility Inventory – Avoidance Alone is consistent with the research findings by Gardner (1995) and Lenton, Smith, Fox, and Morra (1999), and this relationship provides support for the assertion that Agoraphobia is a gendered construct (McHugh, 2000). The different experiences of women of color as compared to white women are also consistent with Nielsen's (2000) findings that women of color are subjected to more harassment than white women.

Clinical and Social Implications

Study participants reported that harassment occurs both on and off-campus. In itself, gender-based public harassment can make women feel unsafe. On-campus incidents of harassment may lead female students to feel even more unsafe. If their campus, which for many students can represent a safe community, harbors men who harass, women may wonder where they can go to feel safe. Feeling unsafe on campus may affect women's cognitive abilities. Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Nora, and Terenzini (1999) found that at both 2-year and 4-year colleges, women's experiences of a "chilly climate" on campus had significant negative associations with cognitive outcome measures. A chilly climate can be created by sexist or stereotypical remarks or by discrimination, which can be overt or covert. On-campus harassment likely contributes to a "chilly" environment. In addition to potentially affecting cognition, female college students report that sexual harassment on-campus makes them feel embarrassed, angry, scared, less confident, and disappointed with their college experience (Dyer, 2005).

For therapists, it would be beneficial to take a feminist approach with students, as well as non-student women. Such an approach would validate women's perceptions that the world, including a college campus, can feel unsafe and disparaging, and they can recognize that they are experiencing an understandable reaction to a system of oppression. Additionally, given how difficult it can be for women to respond to harassment, a feminist approach may encourage empowering behavior, such as by encouraging women to take action against public harassment. This brings their personal problems into a political arena, which is where gender-based public harassment should be. A feminist approach also influences conceptualization of the presenting

problem; clinicians understand that body image and self-esteem concerns are connected to society at large. They may not be due only to individual differences or family of origin issues.

However, women should not be the sole activists against public harassment, as that may cross the line into victim-blaming. Men need to be held accountable for their actions and taught that what they may think of as a joke actually can have a long-lasting, negative impact. On-campus outreach programs can reach male students, and speaking about public harassment at events such as Take Back The Night may reach both college students and men in the community. Additionally, training programs for mental health professionals can raise awareness and sensitivity by teaching about the effects of gender-based public harassment.

Given past research and the present study, it appears that women who are harassed may begin avoiding public places when alone. If they do not go out because there is no one to accompany them or because they do not want to encourage the concept that women should not be in public when unaccompanied, their behavior may be inaccurately assessed as agoraphobic. Women should not be pathologized for engaging in behavior that society attempts to force upon them. In addition to Agoraphobia, there may be other diagnoses that women tend to receive due to a behavioral response to oppression, and it may be time to re-assess diagnostic categories.

Given the long history and pervasiveness of gender-based public harassment, it is clear that this is not something that will go away overnight. The question is how to respond to it, yet developing a socially acceptable response may prove challenging. Bowman (1993) points out that some may view attempts to stop gender-based public harassment as contradictory to the First Amendment. However, Bowman argues that this form of harassment should not be protected by the First Amendment. For example, she writes that if a behavior, verbal or non-verbal, is

intended to cause distress, it is not subject to First Amendment rights. Additionally, some harassing behaviors include the use of defamatory language that is an exception to First Amendment rights. Bowman believes that regulating street harassment “is essential to compelling state interests, unrelated to the suppression of free expression: the security, liberty, and equality of women” (p. 546). However, it is likely that some people will see the attempted suppression of gender-based public harassment as contradictory to Constitutional rights and would work to counter Bowman’s arguments.

Heben (1995) has also explored ways in which public harassment might be legally remedied. She writes that the two potential legal avenues are tort law and criminal law and that having these avenues available, regardless of whether women choose to take them, may decrease the feelings of helplessness women experience as a result of harassment. Heben states that “a subcategory of the tort of invasion of privacy: intrusion upon seclusion” (p. 208) may help reshape the law, although she also notes several limitations of applying this tort to harassment. A criminal remedy that might be applied to public harassment is a monetary fine, but there are limitations to this, as well, including the fact that women might not report harassment.

However, Heben also notes that it is important to avoid essentialism, meaning the idea that all of women’s experiences can be lumped together, irrespective of other aspects, such as race, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. Nielsen’s (2000) research serves as a reminder that women have different ideas about harassment and what to do about it. Nielsen found that many of her participants, both male and female, were not in favor of regulating sexually suggestive speech, even if they viewed it as a serious personal problem. The reasons for not favoring regulation fell into four categories: concern about limiting First Amendment rights,

which might lead to a “slippery slope”; feelings of autonomy, with women expressing that they either do not or should not need help; concerns about the practicality of regulating harassing speech; and distrust or cynicism about the law.

Society may be more accepting of the regulation of public harassment if men and women stop trivializing or romanticizing this behavior. Many men do not realize that their behavior can have long-lasting effects, yet harassment clearly has a number of negative effects on women’s mental health. It may contribute to self-objectification, which perpetuates women’s oppressed status because they seem to forget that they have worth separate from their bodies. Society needs to become more aware of these effects. Once people recognize the ways in which harassment is harmful to women, and to society, they may begin to stop viewing the behavior as trivial and be willing to take steps to make social changes. Some of these steps should include decreasing women’s socialization to fear rape and decreasing the victim-blaming that both men and women sometimes attribute to female rape survivors. Victim-blaming allows men to continue to be in control of women’s behavior, rather than working towards equality. Although female students’ reaction to the Brigham Young University incident described above may seem excessive, it may take such excessive steps for individuals to begin viewing harassment and victim-blaming as severely problematic.

Limitations of the Present Study and Future Directions for Research

It is important to note some limitations when interpreting these results. First, all participants were selected from a public university in rural Pennsylvania, and many participants likely grew up in Pennsylvania. Therefore, results may not be generalizable to other geographic areas or to women who are not college aged. Additionally, students were required to participate

in either psychology studies or article reviews as part of their course requirements. Although participants were informed that they could withdraw from the present study with no penalty, and although participants appeared to respond to questions thoughtfully and truthfully, it is possible that a potential lack of motivation affected their responses.

It is also important to recognize that the harassment questionnaire was developed specifically for this study. The internal consistency for each subscale was acceptable. However, if this questionnaire is used in the future, it will be important to conduct additional reliability and validity checks with multiple populations. Furthermore, all data was based on self-report and therefore subject to common self-report limitations, such as biased reporting and inaccurate recall. Also, the measures were given in the same order to all participants, which may have affected the responses.

Many of the tested correlations were statistically significant. It is meaningful to note, though, that the Harassing Experiences and Reaction to Harassment subscales accounted for relatively little variance in the other variables. Variance accounted for by these measures ranged from approximately 3% to approximately 7%. This indicates that variance may be shared by a number of other variables, including self-esteem, as described above.

There are a number of directions in which future research can go, and it is clear that continued research needs to be done in the area of gender-based public harassment. The present study was meant to be exploratory. Many results were expected and provided support for or were consistent with prior research. However, this study would benefit from replication, particularly with a harassment measure that has undergone psychometric assessment. There are several ways in which the harassment questionnaire can be revised. For example, the Reaction to Harassment

subscale should be substantially expanded. Other reactions to add might include feelings of disrespect, embarrassment, and violation. It may be useful to add milder words, as well, such as “annoyed,” which might decrease number of participants who have “neutral” responses. Future item on this scale can be drawn from Appendix C.

The Harassing Experiences subscale assessed behaviors ranging from more mild (being stared at) to more severe (being touched or followed), but this study primarily looked at frequency. It may be helpful for future research to explore how severity of harassment affects women. A revised version should also state more than once that the participants are only meant to report harassment that came from strangers, as some participants reported harassing incidents from managers, boyfriends, and other non-strangers. The word “strangers” may need to be better defined, as well. For example, if a harasser lives in the same campus dormitory as the victim, but the victim has not actually met him, does that count? What about customers who are regulars at a woman’s place of employment?

The present study asked participants to reflect on harassing experiences in the 2 years prior to their participation. Given that many of the participants were probably first year students, it is likely that some of their experiences occurred while they were in high school. It is possible that where they lived prior to entering college influenced their results. For example, those who lived in urban areas may have experienced different types or a different amount of harassment than students who lived in suburban or rural areas.

Future research should also continue to explore the different experiences of harassment that white women and women of color are subjected to. For example, are there differences in the forms or amount of harassment that women experience based on whether they are African-

American, Asian-American, Latina, or Biracial? The present study did not look at qualities of the harasser, and future research should explore this avenue. Although any man can harass, are there demographic differences between men who harass white women versus women of color? If so, what reactions do the women have? For example, Fogg-Davis (2006) observes that intraracial harassment can have different effects on African-American women than interracial harassment. As an example, Fogg-Davis notes that African-American women may have to prioritize race or sex as their primary social identity: “Confronted with the relentless onslaught of messages that depict them as natural prostitutes and ‘breeders,’ many black women adopt the defensive stereotype of the [strong black woman] . . . which prevents them from seeing street harassment as a pressing political issue that harms them” (p. 73). In that example, a woman is choosing race over sex. Interracial harassment may demonstrate differences as well, such as African-American women responding to a white harasser based on a long history of slavery and domination (Heben, 1995).

Looking at who harasses will also help disperse stereotypes that women have. Gardner’s (1995) female participants expressed a belief that harassers can be predicted based on race, class, or other categories, but they cannot. Because women have yet to realize this, they look for confirming evidence. For example, white women may feel that African-American men are most likely to harass, in part due to “the myth of the black rapist,” and may therefore view comments by black men as more harassing than comments by white men. (Heben, 1995).

Almost all participants identified as heterosexual, and the small sample size of those who did not identify as heterosexual made it impossible to use sexual orientation as a variable in the present study. Women who identify as lesbian, bisexual, or transgender may be subjected to

different forms of harassment. They may also have different reactions to being harassed. For example, some heterosexual women cope with harassment by bringing a male partner or friend with them. How might a woman who identifies as a lesbian feel if she has to take similar measures to avoid gender-based harassment? As Bowman (1993) writes, “Lesbians are subjected to a uniquely offensive experience, as they are both ‘punished’ for being women and assumed to be what they are not – heterosexual” (p. 531). Yet if a woman is openly gay, she may become a dual target as a woman *and* as a lesbian. Public harassment can be based on race, age, sexual orientation, physical ability, culture, and other domains of diversity. Future research may benefit from looking into these other forms of harassment and the effects they have on other minority or oppressed populations.

The present study was not intended to determine causation. Future research should address in what ways, or if, harassment directly contributes to self-esteem, body image, self-objectification, avoidance behavior, and other variables. Furthermore, given the limited amount of variance for which experiences of harassment and the emotional reactions account, it may be useful to explore how these variables mediate or moderate other variables or how other variables mediate or moderate the link to harassment. More detailed results regarding the relationship of gender-based public harassment to other psychological constructs may affect how society works to decrease harassment and the objectification of women.

Although women appear to have primarily negative reactions to being harassed, sometimes reactions are positive. For example, on the Reaction to Harassment subscale, women were forced to choose between “flattered” and “insulted” for one of the questions, but some women may be both. In fact, one participant endorsed two scores for that item, one towards the

“flattered” end and one towards the “insulted” end. It is doubtful that this is an uncommon reaction in society. After all, if women have learned to objectify themselves, it is reasonable that a part of them would be flattered that their bodies are perceived as objects worthy of objectification. Therefore, research may benefit from exploring women’s more positive responses to harassment. Is it common for women to experience equally negative *and* positive reactions to the same incident, or does one of those reactions tend to be stronger? Is it possible to predict whether a woman will respond positively or negatively based on some other variable? If a woman has a positive reaction to harassment, it may be due to avoid feeling disempowered by the experience. Or, she may be a high self-objectifier. Discovering what contributes to a positive reaction to harassment may provide more information about self-objectification or other variables that should be targeted in society and in future research.

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Appendix A: Harassment Questionnaire

1. How old are you?
2. What is your racial background? In other words, what do you consider your race to be, based on ancestry, heredity, and physical characteristics?
3. How do you define your sexual orientation/sexual identity?
4. Gender-based public harassment is verbal or nonverbal harassment that occurs in public places (such as streets, parks, and alleys) or semi-public places (such as restaurants and movie theaters). The behavior can include, but is not limited to, stalking, insults, sexual innuendo, hitting, and fondling. What other examples of public harassment can you think of?
5. Have you ever been harassed, based on your gender, on the street or in another public or semi-public place? If so, please provide a personal example.

When answering the following questions, please think about the past **2 years**, and think only about **men you had not met before** (i.e., strangers). Circle the number above the description:

6. When you are in public (on-campus or off-campus):

a. How often were you stared at by men in a way that made you feel uncomfortable (e.g., leering, eyeing you up and down)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

b. How often did men direct non-verbal sounds at you (e.g., whistling at you)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

c. How often did men make gestures that made you feel uncomfortable (e.g., pantomiming a sexual act, grabbing his crotch, beckoning you closer)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

d. How often did men indecently expose themselves to you (e.g., exposing his buttocks or genitals)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

e. How often did men comment on your appearance (e.g., “Nice shirt,” or “What’s with your hair?”)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

f. How often did men direct vulgar, offensive, or insulting remarks at you (e.g., “nice tits” or “bitch”)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

g. How often were you followed by a strange man (whether he was on foot or in a car)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

h. How often did you receive unwanted touching by a man (e.g., touching your waist, brushing a hand against your breast, squeezing your buttocks, etc.)?

<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Almost Always

If applicable, please provide an example:

7.

a. How often did the above behaviors occur **on campus**?

0 1 2 3 4
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Almost Always

b. What types of harassing behaviors were most likely to occur **on campus**?

8.

a. How often did the above behaviors occur **off campus**?

0 1 2 3 4
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Almost Always

b. What types of harassing behaviors were most likely to occur **off campus**?

9. How did you feel when any of the above behaviors occurred?

The following questions ask you to rate how the harassing behaviors made you feel. You will be given two opposite words or phrases and asked to select the number closest to the word or phrase that best fits how you felt.

10. To what degree did the harassing behaviors make you feel:

a.							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Worried	_____						Calm
	Very Worried	Somewhat Worried	Slightly Worried	Neither Worried Nor Calm	Slightly Calm	Somewhat Calm	Very Calm
b.							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fearful	_____						Fearless
	Very Fearful	Somewhat Fearful	Slightly Fearful	Neither Fearful Nor Fearless	Slightly Fearless	Somewhat Fearless	Very Fearless
c.							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Angry	_____						Peaceful
	Very Angry	Somewhat Angry	Slightly Angry	Neither Angry Nor Peaceful	Slightly Peaceful	Somewhat Peaceful	Very Peaceful
d.							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Concerned About Your Looks	_____						Unconcerned
	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Slightly concerned	Neither concerned Nor unconcerned	Slightly unconcerned	Somewhat unconcerned	Very unconcerned
e.							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Insulted	_____						Flattered
	Very Insulted	Somewhat Insulted	Slightly Insulted	Neither Insulted Nor Flattered	Slightly Flattered	Somewhat Flattered	Very Flattered

Appendix B: Qualitative Responses to the Harassing Experiences Subscale

Below are responses that participants gave as examples of harassing behaviors they had experienced. In some cases, responses are edited for spelling and grammar to make them more understandable, but otherwise wording and formatting is unchanged. Responses that were the same or very similar are not repeated.

- “comments shouted, while walking, about my appearance”
- “you’re hot”
- “I was at Subway last weekend and a man behind me in line attempted to touch my butt but was stopped by one of my friends before he could. Also I have had guys shout out comments to me and my friends while we are walking.”
- “My friend and I were walking to her house and a man in a mini-van stopped, rolled down his window, and just stared at us and continued to drive along side of us as we walked.”
- “While walking, men often whistle or yell comments at me and my friends.”
- “At work I had numerous male customers look me up and down.”
- “creepy men hitting on me. [One man] tried to grab but I hit him.”
- “Walking in the dark by myself, 2 men followed me home. They waited outside for 30 [minutes], then left.”
- “Receiving text messages from a guy who I haven’t ever met. He would say awkward things just to get me upset and then would start asking about sex and wanted to see my reaction towards that.”

- “A lot of guys say things like ‘nice tits’ in public and it doesn’t make me very comfortable. Sure I might have a large chest but nobody has to announce it.”
- “One day I was going to school. It’s so early that few people [are] on the street. I just walked along the street and didn’t notice someone keep up with me. When I perceived that, the man had already touched me and made me feel uncomfortable. I screamed and ran away from him. But no one there can help me.”
- “This one man brushed up against me in a way that didn’t seem accidental.”
- “One time I was walking into a building, and this guy yelled ‘damn that’s a nice ass’”
- “. . . walking down the street and getting honks and whistles from jerks . . . I have also had employees of restaurants and movie theaters use inappropriate language like calling me ‘hot stuff’ or ‘hey dolly,’ etc.”
- “guys coming up at parties and grinding up on me”
- “staring in a weird way”
- “beeping their horn while driving by”
- “jokingly called a slut”
- “Old creepy man used to come to my work & wait afterwards.”
- “Never physically harassed, only verbally like when you’re walking down the street & a group of guys start yelling things like ‘hey baby,’ etc.”
- “Sometimes I will get a comment about my appearance, but it’s never been a bad comment.”
- “As a female, I have experienced that attending any event at most IUP frats, girls are expected to just be there as part of some kind of competition between the ‘brothers.’ Just

because I am a girl does not give you the right to treat me like a slut or disrespect or degrade me in any way.”

- “When I was walking to class a male grabbed my butt and told me he could ‘make me happy’”
- “When my [girlfriend] and I were driving to the beach a group of guys came up beside us and showed us their genitals.”
- “When I was leaving Wal-Mart, a man followed me, and then followed me in his car. I called the police.”
- “winking”
- “Guys present themselves as animals and females (myself) as a piece of meat.”
- “winking and smiling”
- “When at home in Philadelphia a guy just kept following me, saying sexual remarks about my chest, b/c [it’s] big.”
- “Guys usually [say] to me ‘got milk’ b/c of the size of my chest.”
- “While I was serving a man and his other drunken employees, I experienced sexual assault. He kept asking me to show him my thong underwear. Of course I refused but then when my back was turned he reached down my pants to pull my thong out. I was hurt and ashamed as the whole [restaurant] stared at me.”
- “I’ve been honked at or guys have yelled at me while driving by.”
- “I’ve been stared at when at the cafeteria or in the elevator.”
- “I was once followed out of a store to my car & I got so nervous I ended up getting into an accident. It was really scary.”

- “Guys try to hit on me all the time and may follow me or insult me when I don’t give them what they want.”
- “A friend and I were walking down the street, when a group of boys rode up behind us and slapped our behinds . . .”
- “I have had sexual innuendos yelled at me; I’ve been touched by strangers (ex. had my butt grabbed) . . .”
- “guys yelling out of cars”
- “Guys will degrade [me] because I am of the female gender, like saying that all women are good for is to be there for the man when he ‘needs’ her.”
- “A man followed me around a store, then stuck his head under my dressing room door.”
- “I have been hit on several times at my place of employment and have also had my butt frequently smacked without my consent.”
- “Everyday, guys say something, make a comment.”
- “I have been cornered by a group of about ten guys when I was shopping with one of my friends (another girl). Not to mention cat calls, honking, shouting, & other forms of rude behavior that occurs on a normal basis when walking from one place to another.”
- “I once had a guy tell me that I shouldn’t wear a Hooters t-shirt (which I was wearing at the time) because people would think I was a whore.”
- “When I turn someone down to dance or go on a date, I later hear them refer to me as ‘that bitch.’”
- “I had a guy keep calling me ‘B cup.’ I have heard ‘Bitch tits,’ too.”
- “Getting on the bus, some may eye me up and down.”

- “While [I was] at a bus stop, a man once showed me his penis while he drove past.”
- “. . . My boyfriend and I were walking on the sidewalk and a guy yelled, “Hey man, you better fuck her tonight’ and then made a vulgar gesture.”
- “[I was followed] once for 10 miles, had to call the state police. No action could be taken because I couldn’t get a plate #.”
- “I have been followed and had catcalls/sexual phrases yelled at me on campus at night.”
- “A guy I didn’t know came up to me and asked me for my name and number. I ignored him so he called me a name.”
- “If I am by myself at [a campus dining hall], a guy will stare you up and down while you are waiting.”
- “Since I have a larger bottom, I tend to get African-American males to stare at my backside.” [This response came from a participant who identified as white.]
- “Occasionally in a party setting, boys I haven’t met comment on me. ‘Nice ass’ & then ‘Bitch’ when they’re ignored.”
- “Once I was stopped at a stop sign in my car with the window down and a group of male construction workers yelled obscene things at me.”

Appendix C: Qualitative Responses to the Reaction to Harassment Subscale

Below are responses that participants gave as examples of how they felt about being harassed. In some cases, responses are edited for spelling and grammar to make them more understandable, but otherwise wording and formatting is unchanged. Responses that were the same or very similar are not repeated.

- “I just blow it off because most boys are arrogant and that’s just how they are w/ women.”
- “scared”
- “disrespected”
- “belittled, insulted, but sometimes flattered”
- “It made me feel like I was just an object, not a person.”
- “I kind of blew it off. Unless it was drastic. Luckily nothing severe has happened.”
- “like a piece of meat”
- “uncomfortable and sick”
- “awkward, a little annoyed, depending on the situation – kind of violated”
- “frightened, upset, angry”
- “Annoyed, mostly”
- “[I] didn’t really appreciate the awkward ‘grinding’ and such at parties; I don’t really go to many anymore.”
- “I don’t feel any type of way because Men will be Men in my eyes.” [The participant capitalized the word “men.”]
- “Fine, didn’t bother me”
- “creeped out, nervous, upset”

- “It makes you kinda anxious to leave wherever you are & not want to go back to that place where it occurred.”
- “A little uncomfortable, but the more horrible things did not happen to me, and if they did I probably would have confronted the man in question, as I am not timid to confrontation and he’s a pig!”
- “nervous and unsafe”
- “It’s upsetting [and] it usually makes me angry because I feel disrespected. Sometimes, I can just brush it off, but that depends on the situation.”
- “. . . doesn’t really effect me”
- “Sometimes if [they are] good comments I feel okay.”
- “didn’t really care”
- “uncomfortable, uneasy, paranoid”
- “I get mad and tell them off.”
- “embarrassed”
- “mad, scary [sic]”
- “Just ignored them and kept doing what I was doing before it happened”
- “All they want is your body, not your heart or personality.”
- “wanting to blame myself”
- “LOW – like it was my fault. I felt dirty like, ‘is this really what I amount to?’ I felt like I was not a human because I didn’t have any control.”
- “Generally I feel like it’s a compliment because it’s never crossed a line or been too severe.”

- “violated”
- “scared & disgusted”
- “I don’t take too many things personally or let things bother me, so I more than likely just made a comment to myself like ‘Wow, what an idiot’ and went on my way.”
- “I was angry & I told them not to touch me.”
- “angry, uncomfortable, like an object”
- “concerned for myself and the other person”
- “scared, unsure what to do and where to go”
- “judged”
- “Staring is annoying. I don’t mind the whistling – it’s funny. The comments, though, like ‘nice ass’ or grabbing is taking it too far.”
- “I generally ignore it and keep moving, but it does tick me off.”
- “very upset and really didn’t know what to do or say”
- “I felt like an object, that men didn’t appreciate me for my personality or my values, but because I had a ‘nice ass’ or a ‘great figure.’ I hated it.”
- “Sometimes it offended me, but most of the time I knew it was just them being immature.”
- “It actually pisses me off. I am not a doll or a toy. I am not a plaything for some jerk who thinks he’s [G-d].”
- “ready to fight”
- “somewhat flattered that they notice me, but at the same time degraded”
- “angry, violated, ashamed”
- “I’m used to it; I come from an urban neighborhood.”

- “hurt & offended”
- “Sometimes when I’m with my friends, a little attention is fun, cause we know we’re safe. But at school, at night, it’s scary, but in broad daylight, it’s annoying – don’t they have anything better to do?”
- “I feel bad afterwards, because if anyone calls you a name or something like that, you feel ashamed.”
- “Most of the harassment is brought on by what I wear. It made me feel uncomfortable to wear shirts that bring so much attention.”
- “a little offended”
- “Sometimes I brush it off because men are pigs, but it can make you feel like an object.”
- “degraded, like it was my fault”
- “nervous, but then just pretended like [it] didn’t happen”
- “I felt unsafe and did not know how to react or what to do. I also wondered what I had done to warrant the treatment.”
- “Not threatened or embarrassed. I was fine, nothing to be concerned about.”
- “horrible, belittled”
- “angry and frustrated”
- “I like to dress nice for my fiancé, but when I get unwanted attention, it makes me feel like it’s not worth it. It is very uncomfortable and unsettling, especially with much older men.”
- “defenseless, too polite to stand up for [myself]”
- “disgusted”

Appendix D: Multidimensional Body-Self Relations Questionnaire – Appearance Scales

INSTRUCTIONS--PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The following pages contain a series of statements about how people might think, feel, or behave. You are asked to indicate the extent to which each statement pertains to you personally.

Your answers to the items in the questionnaire are anonymous, so please do not write your name on any of the materials. In order to complete the questionnaire, read each statement carefully and decide how much it pertains to you personally. Using a scale like the one below, indicate your answer by entering it to the left of the number of the statement.

EXAMPLE:

_____ I am usually in a good mood.

In the blank space, enter a **1** if you **definitely disagree** with the statement;

enter a **2** if you **mostly disagree**;

enter a **3** if you **neither agree nor disagree**;

enter a **4** if you **mostly agree**;

or enter a **5** if you **definitely agree** with the statement.

There are no right or wrong answers. Just give the answer that is most accurate for you. Remember, your responses are confidential, so please be completely honest and answer all items.

1	2	3	4	5
Definitely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Neither Disagree	Mostly Agree	Definitely Agree

_____ 1. Before going out in public, I always notice how I look.

_____ 2. I am careful to buy clothes that will make me look my best.

_____ 3. My body is sexually appealing.

- _____ 4. I constantly worry about being or becoming fat.
- _____ 5. I like my looks just the way they are.
- _____ 6. I check my appearance in a mirror whenever I can.
- _____ 7. Before going out, I usually spend a lot of time getting ready.
- _____ 8. I am very conscious of even small changes in my weight.
- _____ 9. Most people would consider me good-looking.
- _____ 10. It is important that I always look good.
- _____ 11. I use very few grooming products.
- _____ 12. I like the way I look without my clothes on.
- _____ 13. I am self-conscious if my grooming isn't right.
- _____ 14. I usually wear whatever is handy without caring how it looks.
- _____ 15. I like the way my clothes fit me.
- _____ 16. I don't care what people think about my appearance.
- _____ 17. I take special care with my hair grooming.
- _____ 18. I dislike my physique.
- _____ 19. I am physically unattractive.
- _____ 20. I never think about my appearance.
- _____ 21. I am always trying to improve my physical appearance.
- _____ 22. I am on a weight-loss diet.

For the remainder of the items use the response scale given with the item, and enter your answer in the space beside the item.

_____ 23. I have tried to lose weight by fasting or going on crash diets.

- 1. Never
- 2. Rarely
- 3. Sometimes
- 4. Often
- 5. Very Often

_____ 24. I think I am:

- 1. Very Underweight
- 2. Somewhat Underweight
- 3. Normal Weight
- 4. Somewhat Overweight
- 5. Very Overweight

_____ 25. From looking at me, most other people would think I am:

- 1. Very Underweight
- 2. Somewhat Underweight
- 3. Normal Weight
- 4. Somewhat Overweight
- 5. Very Overweight

26-34. Use this 1 to 5 scale to indicate how dissatisfied or satisfied you are with each of the following areas or aspects of your body:

1	2	3	4	5
Very Dissatisfied	Mostly Dissatisfied	Neither Nor Dissatisfied	Mostly Satisfied	Very Satisfied

_____ 26. Face (facial features, complexion)

_____ 27. Hair (color, thickness, texture)

_____ 28. Lower torso (buttocks, hips, thighs, legs)

- _____ 29. Mid torso (waist, stomach)
- _____ 30. Upper torso (chest or breasts, shoulders, arms)
- _____ 31. Muscle tone
- _____ 32. Weight
- _____ 33. Height
- _____ 34. Overall appearance

Appendix E: Objectified Body Consciousness Scale

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INSTRUCTIONS:

Circle the number that corresponds to how much you agree with each of the statements on the following pages.

Circle NA only if the statement does not apply to you. Do not circle NA if you don't agree with a statement.

For example, if the statement says "When I am happy, I feel like singing" and you don't feel like singing when you are happy, then you would circle one of the disagree choices. You would only circle NA if you were never happy.

	Strongly Disagree	2	3	Neither agree nor disagree	4	5	6	Strongly Agree	7	Does not apply NA
1. I rarely think about how I look.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
2. When I can't control my weight, I feel like something must be wrong with me.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
3. I think it is more important that my clothes are comfortable than whether they look good on me.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
4. I think a person is pretty much stuck with the looks they are born with.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
5. I feel ashamed of myself when I haven't made the effort to look my best.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
6. A large part of being in shape is having that kind of body in the first place.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
7. I think more about how my body feels than how my body looks. ...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
8. I feel like I must be a bad person when I don't look as good as I could.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
9. I rarely compare how I look with how other people look.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	
10. I think a person can look pretty much how they want to if they are willing to work at it.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		NA	

	Strongly Disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Strongly Agree	Does not apply
11. I would be ashamed for people to know what I really weigh.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
12. I really don't think I have much control over how my body looks. .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
13. Even when I can't control my weight, I think I'm an okay person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
14. During the day, I think about how I look many times. .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
15. I never worry that something is wrong with me when I am not exercising as much as I should. ...	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
16. I often worry about whether the clothes I am wearing make me look good.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
17. When I'm not exercising enough, I question whether I am a good enough person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
18. I rarely worry about how I look to other people.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
19. I think a person's weight is mostly determined by the genes they are born with.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
20. I am more concerned with what my body can do than how it looks.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
21. It doesn't matter how hard I try to change my weight, it's probably always going to be about the same.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
22. When I'm not the size I think I should be, I feel ashamed.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
23. I can weigh what I'm supposed to when I try hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA
24. The shape you are in depends mostly on your genes.....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	NA

Appendix F: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. If you **Strongly Agree**, circle **SA**. If you **Agree** with the statement, circle **A**. If you **Disagree**, circle **D**. If you **Strongly Disagree**, circle **SD**.

		1. STRONGLY AGREE	2 AGREE	3. DISAGREE	4. STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.	SA	A	D	SD
2.	I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	SA	A	D	SD
3.	All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.	SA	A	D	SD
4.	I am able to do things as well as most other people.	SA	A	D	SD
5.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	SA	A	D	SD
6.	I take a positive attitude toward myself.	SA	A	D	SD
7.	On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	SA	A	D	SD
8.	I wish I could have more respect for myself.	SA	A	D	SD
9.	I certainly feel useless at times.	SA	A	D	SD
10.	At times I think I am no good at all.	SA	A	D	SD

Appendix G: Mobility Inventory for Agoraphobia

Mobility Inventory

Client ID

Date

1. Please indicate the degree to which you avoid the following places or situations because of discomfort or anxiety. Rate your amount of avoidance when you are with a trusted companion and when you are alone. Do this by using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
never avoid	rarely avoid	avoid about half of the time	avoid most of the time	always avoid

Circle the number for each situation or place under both conditions: when accompanied and when alone. Leave blank situations that do not apply to you.

Places	When accompanied					When alone				
Theaters.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Supermarkets.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Shopping malls.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Classrooms.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Department stores.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Restaurants.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Museums.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Elevators.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Auditoriums or stadiums....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Garages.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
High places.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Please tell how high										
Enclosed places.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Open spaces	When accompanied					When alone				
Outside (for example: fields, wide streets, courtyards)....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Inside (for example: large rooms, lobbies).....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Riding in	When accompanied					When alone				
Buses.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Trains.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Subways.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Airplanes.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Boats.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Driving or riding in car	When accompanied					When alone				
A. at anytime.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
B. on expressways.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Situations	When accompanied					When alone				
Standing in lines.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Crossing bridges.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Parties or social gatherings.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Walking on the street.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Staying at home alone.....						1	2	3	4	5
Being far away from home.....	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Other (specify): _____	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

2. After completing the first step, circle the five items with which you are most concerned. Of the items listed, these are the five situations or places where avoidance/anxiety most affects your life in a negative way.

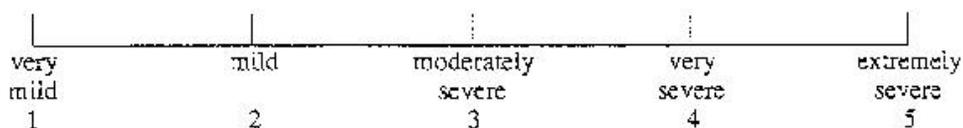
Panic attacks

3. We define a panic attack as:
1. A high level of anxiety accompanied by...
 2. strong body reactions (heart palpitations, sweating, muscle tremors, dizziness, nausea) with...
 3. the temporary loss of the ability to plan, think, or reason and...
 4. the intense desire to escape or flee the situation. (Note: This is different from high anxiety or fear alone).

Please indicate the total number of panic attacks you have had in the last 7 days:

In the last 3 weeks:

How severe or intense have the panic attacks been? (Place an X on the line below):



Safety zone

4. Many people are able to travel alone freely in an area (usually around their home) called their safety zone. Do you have such a zone? If yes, please describe:

a. its location:

b. its size (e.g. radius from home):