

Religious Identity Discrimination in the Physician Workforce: Insights from Two National Surveys of Muslim Clinicians in the US

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Background

- Workplace discrimination confronted by physicians is associated with physician job turnover, career dissatisfaction, and contemplation of career change¹
- Academic healthcare systems seek to combat workplace discrimination and promote inclusion^{2,3}
- Little is known about religious discrimination in the workplace and how it has changed over time

Objective

- Quantify and identify time trends between Muslim physician experiences with religious discrimination in the healthcare workplace

Methods

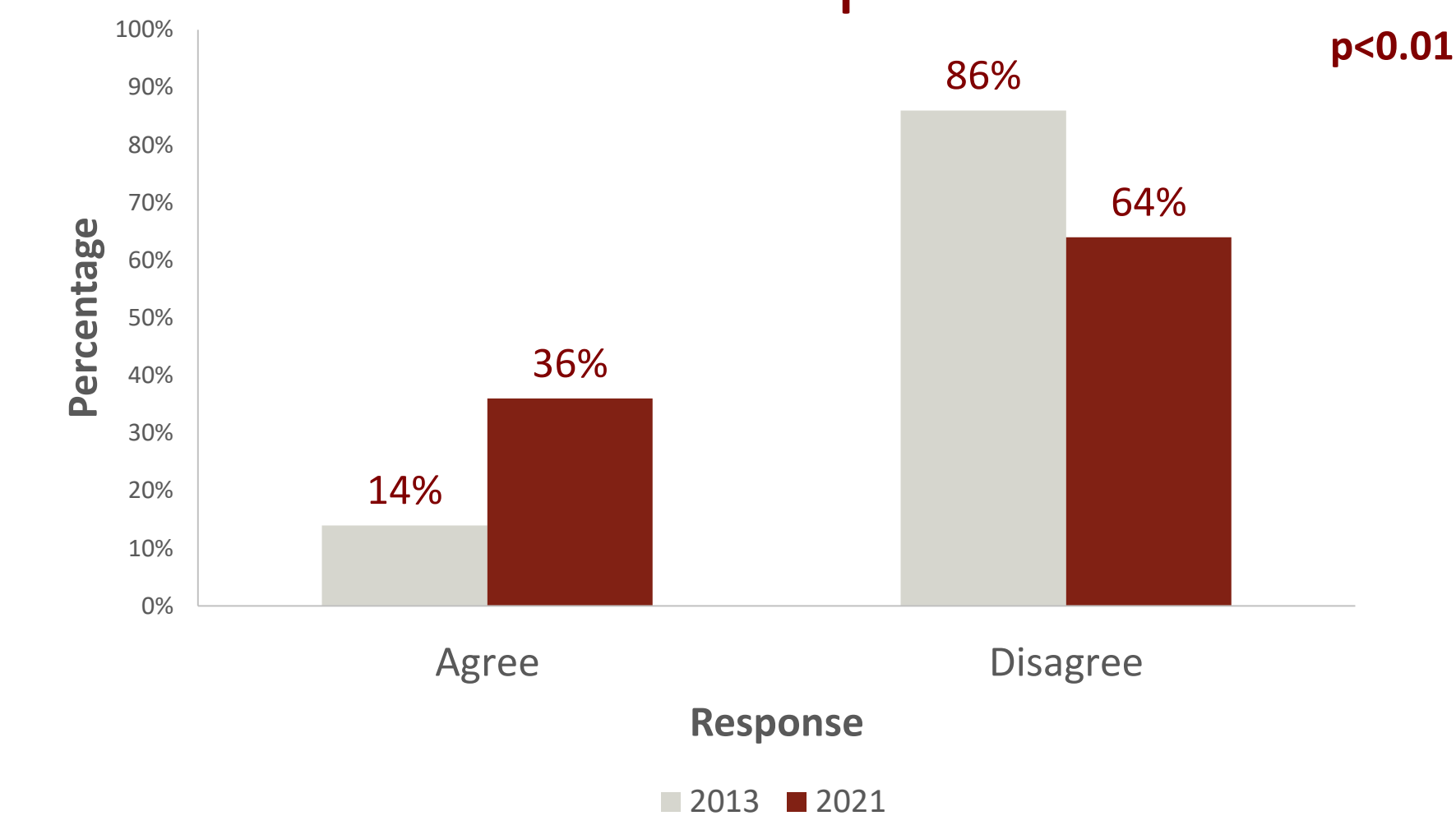
- 2013:** Mailed questionnaire (3 waves with incentives) to random sample of 746 physicians from Islamic Medical Association of North America members at random
- 2021:** Survey administered online via closed listservs with a book raffle incentive recruiting from 3 national Muslim clinician organizations

Results

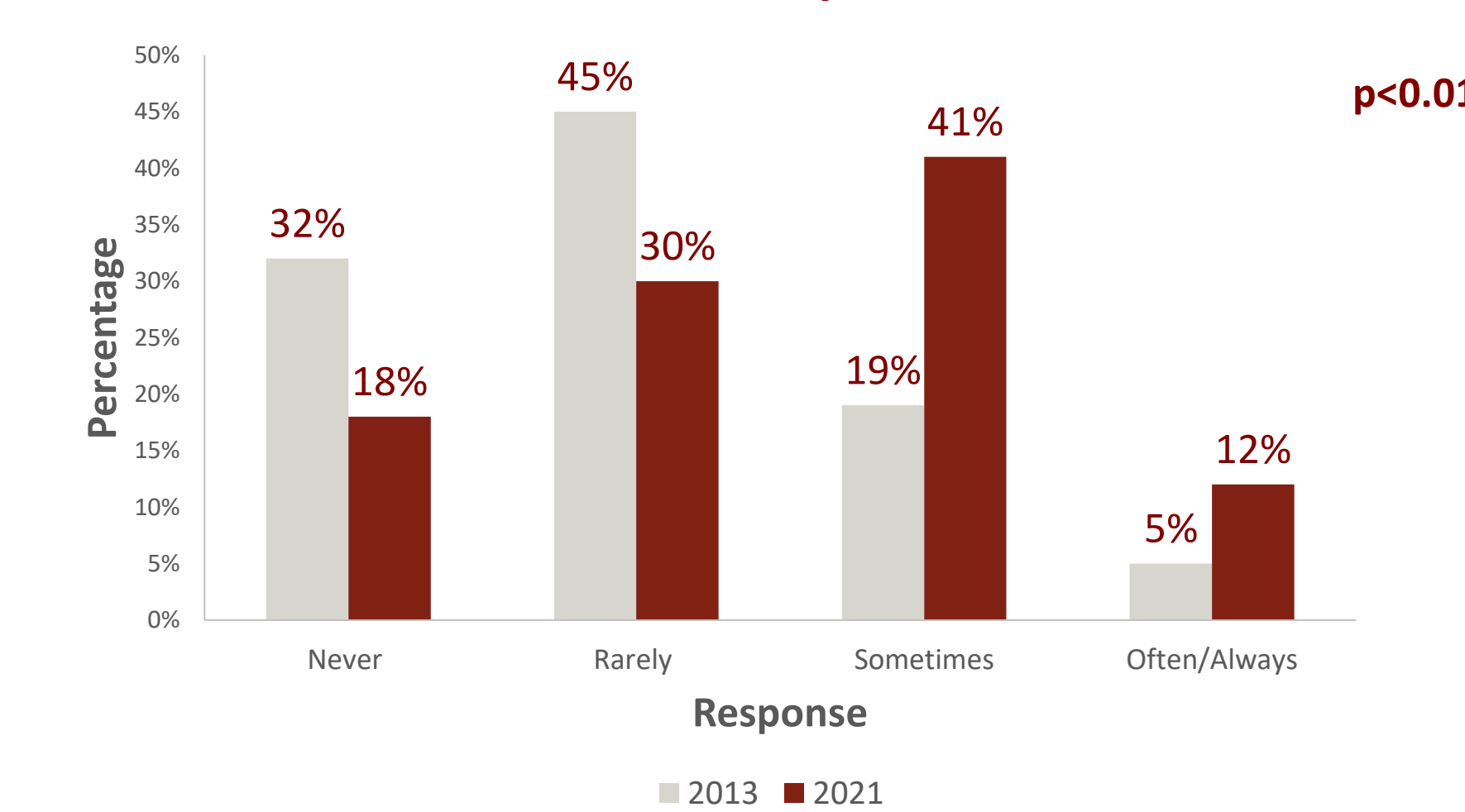
Table 1: Participant Characteristics From The Two National Surveys Of Muslim Physicians

Participants	2013 N=255		2021 N=264		P-Value
Characteristics	N	%	N	%	
Age	N=238		N=227		<0.01
24-39	66	28%	147	65%	
40-55	58	24%	62	27%	
56-69	76	32%	11	5%	
70-84	38	16%	7	3%	
Gender	N=246		N=246		0.25
Male	172	70%	160	65%	
Female	74	30%	86	35%	
Race/Ethnicity	N=247		N=247		<0.01
South Asian	172	70%	82	33%	
Arab Or Middle Eastern	54	22%	55	22%	
White/Caucasian	10	4%	70	28%	
Black/African American	2	1%	40	16%	
Residency Status	N=244		N=247		<0.01
Born In U.S.	47	19%	146	59%	
Immigrated To U.S as a Child	39	16%	57	23%	
Immigrated To U.S as an Adult	158	65%	41	17%	
Years Of Medical Practice Since Completion Of Medical School	N=239		N=205		<0.01
0-10	66	28%	137	67%	
11-20	36	15%	42	21%	
21-30	48	20%	10	5%	
31-41	58	24%	7	3%	
42-57	31	13%	9	4%	
Practice Type	N=225		N=243		<0.01
Teaching Hospital	71	32%	72	30%	
Physician Office/Solo Practice	64	28%	48	20%	
Multispecialty Group Practice or Clinic/Physician Office or Single-Specialty Group	45	20%	93	38%	
Non-Teaching Hospital	31	14%	23	10%	
Other	14	6%	7	3%	
Religious Affiliation	N=244		N=246		<0.01
Sunni	222	91%	184	75%	
Shi'ite	11	5%	59	24%	
Importance of Religion in Respondent's Life	N=254		N=259		<0.01
"The Most Important Part"	136	54%	102	39%	
"Very Important"	90	35%	89	34%	
"Fairly Important"	25	10%	58	22%	
"Not At All Important"	3	1%	10	4%	
Frequency of Attendance at Congregational Worship Services	N=251		N=263		<0.01
Several Times A Week or Daily	64	26%	39	15%	
More Than Once a Month	128	51%	126	48%	
Less Than Monthly But At Least Once Per Year	59	24%	96	37%	

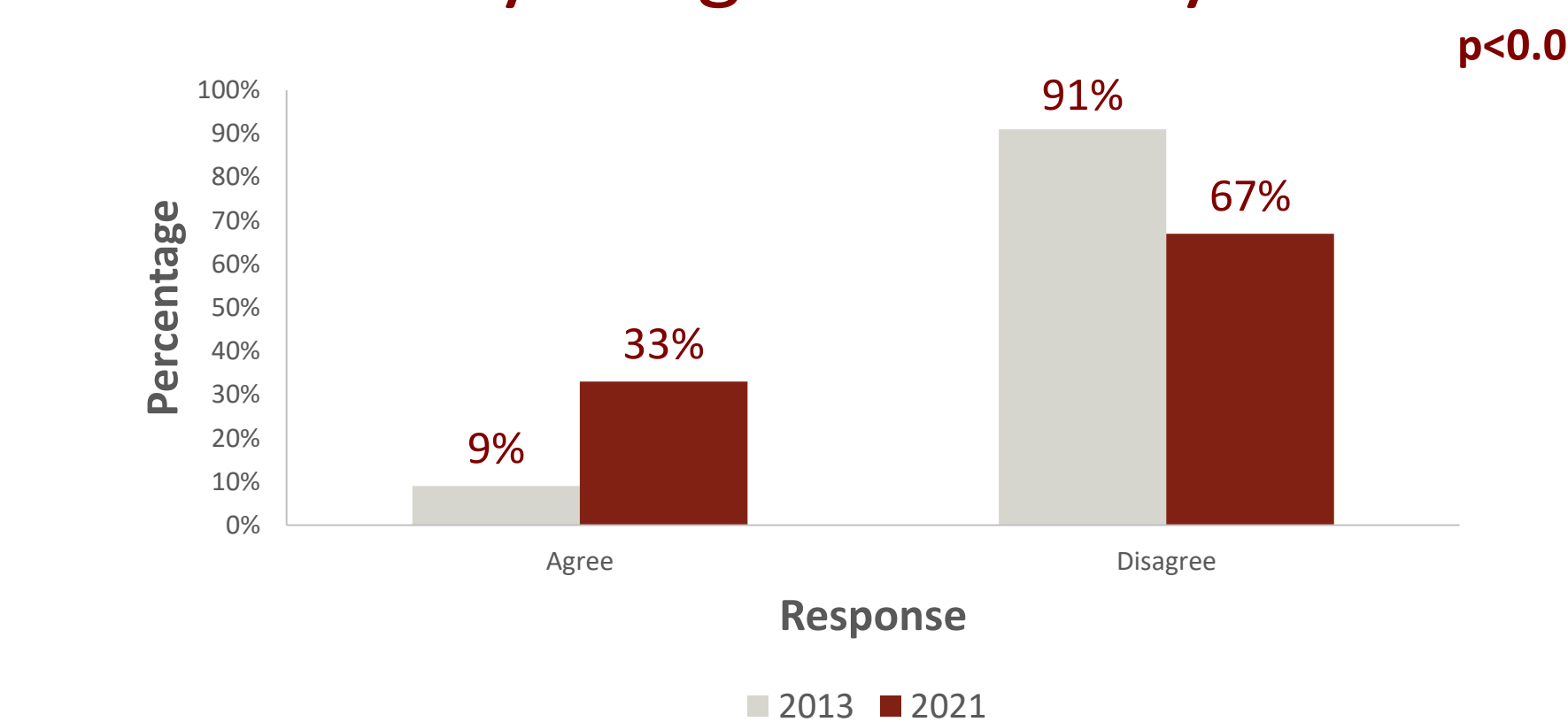
Experience Religious Discrimination at Their Current Workplace



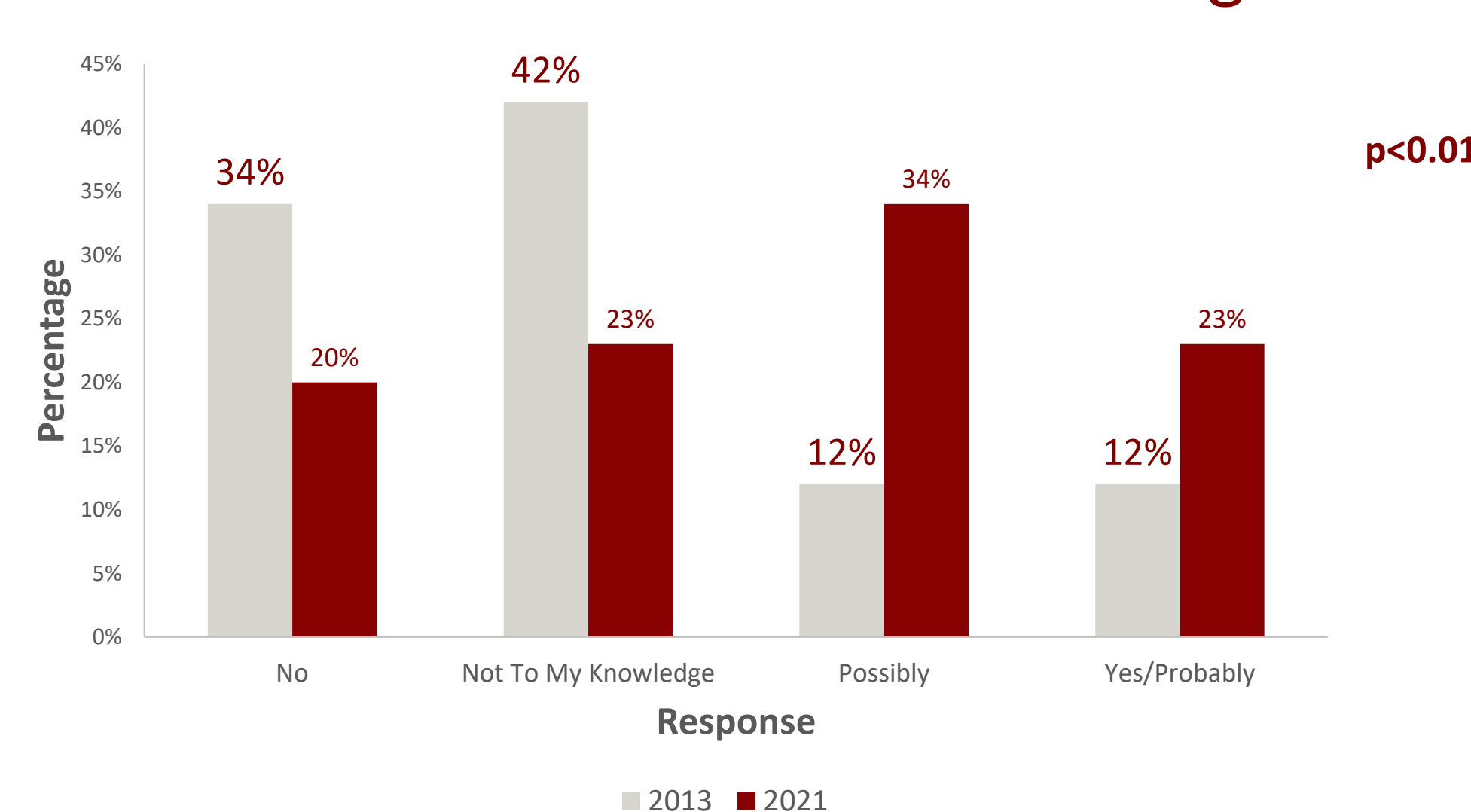
Frequency of Experiencing Religious Discrimination at Workplace Over Career



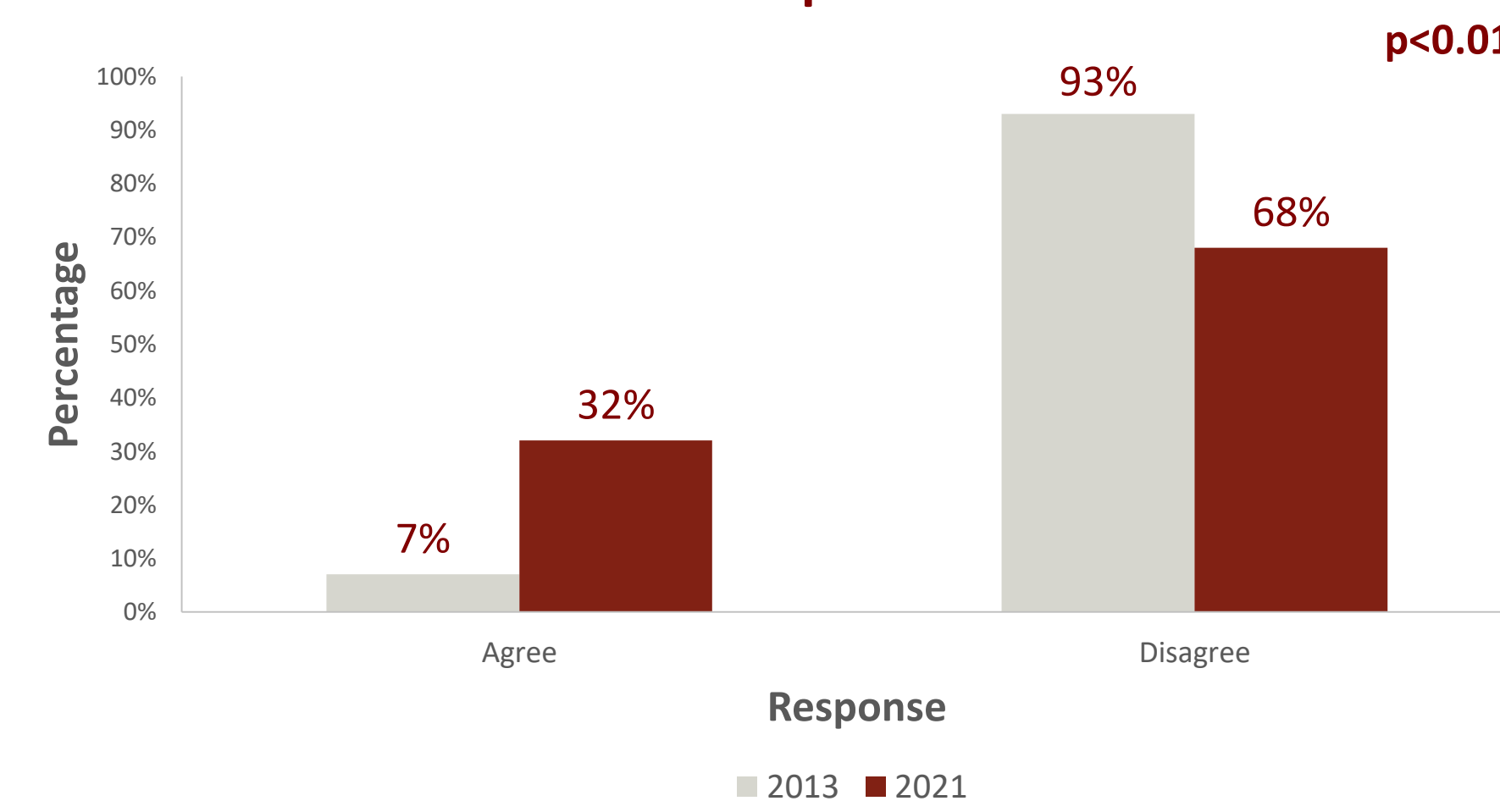
Patients Have Refused My Care Because Of My Religious Identity



Believe They Have Been Passed Over for Professional Advancement Because of Their Religion



Left A Job Due to Discrimination at Workplace



Discussion

- Our surveys demonstrate that workplace climate has gotten more difficult for Muslim physicians in the past decade
- High-profile advocacy movements like Black Lives Matter have sensitized individuals to give voice to social injustice
- 2021 had a greater proportion of native-born and younger participants who may be more intolerant to experiences of discrimination

Implications

- A more diverse Muslim physician sample experiencing more discrimination
- Diversity & Inclusion programming must extend beyond focus on race/ethnicity/sexual orientation
- Need more research focused on religious identity in minority physician populations and time based-analysis of changes over time

References

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- Elliott, T. (2021). How do we move the needle?: Building a framework for diversity, equity, and inclusion within graduate medical education. Family medicine, 53(7), 556-558.