

The prevalence of workplace violence and its association with the health status of Taiwanese employees

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Objectives: The aim of this study was to examine the distribution of workplace violence and its association with health status and job satisfaction among employees in Taiwan. **Methods:** Study subjects were 9,509 male and 7,777 female employees in a nation-wide survey in 2010. A standardized questionnaire was administered to obtain information regarding any experiences of workplace violence encountered over the previous 12 months; this included physical violence, verbal violence, psychological violence and sexual harassment. Self-rated health status, quality of sleep, presence of emotional distress and level of job satisfaction were also assessed. **Results:** The prevalence rates of workplace violence in men and women were, respectively: verbal violence 6.80% and 7.48%, psychological violence 3.39% and 4.06%, physical violence 0.81% and 0.48%, and sexual harassment 0.38% and 1.70%. Night or rotating shifts, longer working hours, greater workloads, greater physical loads, job insecurity and lower workplace justice were found to be risk factors for workplace violence. After adjustments for age and work characteristics, employees who had experienced workplace violence over the previous 12 months were found to be at a higher risk for poor sleep quality (OR men 2.24, women 2.54), poor self-rated health status (OR men 1.95, women 1.97), emotional distress (OR men 3.25, women 3.04) and low job satisfaction (OR 2.63 men, women 3.59). Among the four types of workplace violence, psychological violence appeared to have the strongest association with poor health. **Conclusions:** Adverse work characteristics including night shift, rotating shift, long working hours, physically demanding work, insecure employment and low workplace justice were risk factors for workplace violence, which, in turn, was associated with poor health and low levels of job satisfaction. (*Taiwan J Public Health*. 2014;**33**(1):36-50)

Key Words: workplace violence, employees, occupational health, job satisfaction

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