

Safe at Work?
Women's Experience of
Violence in the Workplace

Summary report of research
September 2005

Acknowledgments

The research was undertaken by URCOT, an independent, not for profit, applied research centre affiliated with RMIT University.

URCOT conducts a wide range of research and organisational development activities and has particular interests in health and well-being issues, especially as they relate to gender. This includes active involvement in work pertaining to working arrangements, workplace violence and bullying and pay equity. Expertise in healthy working life includes system and process design, gender equity, bullying and violence, and work life balance.

URCOT was assisted by Working Women's Health (WWH), who undertook focus group discussions with women from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD). URCOT consulted with and obtained valuable assistance from the Director of Working Women's Health.

Working Women's Health is an immigrant women's organisation committed to improving the health and well-being of immigrant women working in paid and unpaid employment across Australia. WWH provides national leadership and excellence in multilingual health education, advocacy, training, and research with specific expertise in sexual, reproductive, occupational, and mental health.

The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace provided information and guidance to support the research.

The research team would like to thank the many Victorian women who gave their time and were willing to share their experiences. Industry and union representatives who participated in interviews were very willing to help as were the organisations who enabled us to come into their workplaces. We would also like to thank the many other people, including government agency representatives, who provided their knowledge, advice and secondary data.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	5
The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace.....	5
Defining violence at work	5
Existing knowledge about workplace violence against women.....	5
Research questions	6
Study focus and approach	6
Research findings.....	7
The impacts and costs of workplace violence	9
Women’s responses to workplace violence.....	10
Preventing violence against women in the workplace.....	11
Conclusion.....	12
The Women’s Safety Strategy.....	13
The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace.....	13
Women, Work and Violence	13
Defining violence at work	13
Existing knowledge about workplace violence against women.....	14
<i>Research on workplace violence is non-gendered</i>	14
<i>Women’s concentration in low paid, low status and precarious jobs</i>	16
Women’s work as safe work: failings of occupational health and safety research	17
Economic costs of workplace violence	18
Summary	18
Assessing the Prevalence, Incidence and Impacts of Violence Against Women in the Workplace	19
Research questions	19
Study focus and approach	20
Women’s Experiences of Workplace Violence.....	22
Findings from the telephone survey.....	22
Workplace violence is common and affects women of all ages and in all industries and occupations	24
Workplace violence occurs often in many workplaces	25
Individual experiences.....	25
For many women violence is a part of the everyday experience of work	26
Most violence in the workplace is 'internal'	26
Gender of perpetrators and victims	29
Experiences of specific groups of women	29
Summary	30
Immigrant women.....	30
Indigenous women	31
Lesbians	32
Summary	33
Industry case studies	33
Health industry: Hierarchies and ‘internal’ workplace violence	34
On the factory floor, the normalisation of violence in male-dominated workplaces.....	35
Education industry.....	37
The retail and hospitality sectors: Working in small business and dealing with the public	39

Summary	41
Conclusion.....	42
Impacts and Costs.....	42
Workplace violence has diverse consequences for women.....	42
Sick leave and health implications.....	43
WorkCover.....	44
Morale and productivity	44
Likely economic and social costs.....	45
Summary	45
Women's Responses to Workplace Violence	45
Why don't women report violence?.....	46
Violence as a 'normal' part of the workplace	46
Violence is silenced.....	46
Fear of job loss	46
Will reporting be effective?.....	47
Actions other than reporting.....	47
What happens when workplace violence is reported?	48
Snapshot: An effective response to workplace violence	48
What can be learnt?	49
Summary	49
Preventing Violence Against Women in the Workplace.....	50
An Occupational Health approach	50
What women would like to see happen?	51
Indigenous and other community organisations.....	51
Improved regulation	52
Support for workplace diversity.....	52
Support and education	52
Workplace-based solutions	52
Summary	53
Conclusion	54
References.....	55
Appendix A: Telephone Survey Sript	58
Appendix B: Telephone survey data	67

Executive Summary

The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace

The aim of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace is to improve the prevention of, and responses to, violence against women occurring in a workplace setting, including workplace violence, bullying and sexual harassment.

This document reports on research undertaken by URCOT on workplace violence against women. The aim of the research was to identify and report on the extent, impact and costs of all forms of workplace violence against women in general, and also against particular groups of women.

This will enable the Committee to develop a range of recommendations to improve education and training, preventative approaches, reporting procedures, interventions, compliance strategies and recommendations for further investigation.

Defining violence at work

Consistent with the international literature, the working definition of workplace violence against women adopted by the Steering Committee covers both physical and non physical forms of violence. In this research workplace violence against women is understood to include physical assault, threatening behaviour, bullying, verbal abuse, and various forms of harassment. Workplace violence usually occurs in a workplace setting, however it may also occur outside of the work setting. Violence may be perpetrated by a colleague or supervisor, a client or customer, a family member or a member of the public.

Existing knowledge about workplace violence against women

Much of the literature tends to deal with workplace violence in a non-gendered way, avoiding critical analysis which considers the implications of gender, class, race and sexuality. Issues of power and identity are rarely included in the discussion on workplace violence. Rather, it encompasses generic information about definitions, likely perpetrators, high risk occupations and workplaces and prevention strategies. However, it could be argued that this literature is gendered insofar as it largely excludes women's experiences of violence within the broader organisational structure.

Given the significance of gender in shaping social outcomes and experiences, and especially where women are vulnerable, a gender analysis can contribute to the development of important insights. For example, when gender is incorporated in analyses of workplace violence, important issues emerge. These include:

- women have difficulty in labelling their experiences as violence and harassment;
- women are over-represented in low paid, low status and precarious jobs;

- occupational health and safety research has often viewed women's work as safe work;
- men are more likely to be the perpetrators of violence against women in the workplace (although women also perpetrate violence against other women); and
- family violence can intrude into the victim's workplace.

Studies to estimate the costs of workplace violence often refer to workers compensation claims including stress related claims, as well as factors such as staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced efficiency, decline in work quality, early retirement costs, counselling program costs, mediation or grievance proceedings, antidiscrimination action, and applications to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission. However, even when all these costs are able to be estimated there are likely to be hidden costs which have not been fully taken into account.

One estimate of the cost to Australian employers of bullying alone is between six and 13 billion dollars each year when hidden and lost opportunity costs are included, with the cost of each case of bullying estimated at a minimum \$16,977 (Sheehan, McCarthy, Barker et al 2001).

Research questions

In light of the knowledge available from international and Australian sources, this research set out to address the following questions about workplace violence and women in Victoria:

- What is the type and frequency of violence in the workplace against women in general and against particular groups of women?
- How does the experience of workplace violence impact on women, including its impact on their lives outside of the workplace?
- What are the cultural and structural characteristics of sectors and workplaces where there is reported violence against women?
- What has supported or hindered women from reporting the violence, and receiving responses appropriate to their needs?
- What are the economic and social costs of workplace violence?

Study focus and approach

The experience of earlier studies of violence against women has demonstrated the need to use a range of research methods in order to ensure that the distinctive experiences of women are described and understood. This study aimed to ensure that women's voices were heard and that the conditions faced by women in the workplace, – different conditions to those faced by men – were recognised. A key starting point for the research was recognition of the importance of gender and its relationship with race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, sexuality, disability, or other status to understand women's experience.

The methodology included a literature review, a household telephone survey of 1,000 Victorian women, focus group discussions with Indigenous women, lesbians and

immigrant women and interviews and group discussions focussing on the experiences of women in some selected industries.

Research findings

Findings from the telephone survey

The extent of workplace violence against women in Victorian workplaces is considerable. When all forms of violence considered in this study were included, 62.1 per cent (607) women had experienced violence at work within the last five years. This violence included: being sworn at or shouted at; hostile behaviours; being intimidated or threatened; bullying; victimization; physical attacks; racial harassment, sexual harassment, robbery; wounding or battering; stalking; and rape.

Many women also witnessed violence perpetrated upon others in their workplaces. In total 484 women (50%) reported witnessing violence directed towards others in the workplace.

Workplace violence against women occurs often in many workplaces with 96 per cent of those experiencing violence at work in the last 12 months reporting it had occurred on multiple occasions.

Violence against women in the workplace is often normalised and for many women such violence is part of everyday work and is not recognised as violence. While 69 per cent of women had experienced or witnessed the behaviours listed above, only 39 per cent of women in the survey initially identified that they had experienced or witnessed 'violence'.

Supervisors and colleagues perpetrate more violence against women in the workplace than people 'external' to organisations (such as clients, customers, students, patients and family members). In 40 per cent of cases of 'internal' workplace violence, managers, supervisors or business owners perpetrated the violence and in 60 per cent of cases the perpetrator was another worker.

Men were more likely to perpetrate violence against women in the workplace (69%), with 31 per cent of the perpetrators being women.

Findings from the focus groups

Focus group discussions were held to further investigate experiences of specific groups of women – immigrant women, Indigenous women and lesbians.

Immigrant women are over-represented in low paid, low status occupations. They may be unfamiliar with their rights and may also face a language barrier that impedes their access to services and information. All these factors increase their vulnerability to workplace violence. Most violence reported by immigrant women was perpetrated by a manager or supervisor and often occurred in open environments of discrimination. Women experienced isolation in workplaces where violent cultures were normalised and reported feeling vulnerable and alone.

For Indigenous women a broader context of racism and disadvantage in access to work and to career advancement underlies the experience of violence. Violence in 'white'

organisations was seen as an extension of being treated as 'second class' people, while in Indigenous community organisations, it related to the power that some individuals, because of their family background, have over others.

Indigenous women also spoke of how high levels of violence in some Indigenous communities and the close knit nature of Indigenous communities and their family based structure could impact on the way that violence in the workplace is perceived and dealt with. For younger women, problems such as sexual harassment can be particularly difficult to address, because this may mean addressing it with an older man who may hold considerably more power in the community as well as the workplace.

Lesbians spoke of feeling alienated from colleagues and managers in workplaces where they battled ignorance about themselves and their communities to gain acceptance. Women reported regular workplace experiences of harassment and discrimination directed at them because they were lesbians. One of the biggest concerns for the lesbians was the extent to which they felt able to be open about their sexuality without being afraid of adverse consequences.

Findings from the industry case studies

The four industry studies were selected on the basis of a number of factors. Health and education are both female dominated industries with many women employed in the 'high-risk' occupations identified by Chappell and Di Martino (1998), such as teaching and nursing. In the retail and hospitality sectors many women work in low-paid and less secure part-time and casual jobs. The male dominated manufacturing sector presents very different work environments for women, both for those on the factory floor and for women in professional roles.

The findings of the health industry study are consistent with Mayhew and Chappell's (2001a) conclusion that organisations with dominant/subordinate hierarchical relationships are likely to experience internal workplace violence resulting in significant productivity losses. Other factors in internal violence appear to be external pressures on management and staff and neglect of issues of workplace behaviour issues in training, especially perhaps in the professions. While we know from other research that much physical violence in the workplace goes unreported, this study suggests that non physical violence, which is often internal to the workplace, may be widespread and largely unchecked.

While the experiences of professional women and process workers on the factory floor differ in many ways, together they show how entrenched and normalised violence can be in some male-dominated environments. Women working in such workplaces come to believe they have to put up with a certain level of discomfort, and those in the most vulnerable positions may even be in the situation where they feel fearful and threatened a lot of the time.

Apparent in the education industry examples is the role of increasing employment insecurity whereby women are reluctant to report workplace violence for fear of retaliation and job loss. Women are often those who are least powerful in the workplace and therefore most vulnerable to internal violence. The fear of job loss is heightened for women living in regional communities where labour markets are limited, especially if perpetrators are influential. The school study demonstrates how the distress and injury

women experience as a result of violence perpetrated by those external to the workplace (in these cases students and parents) is being worsened as managers fail to respond appropriately.

Women who experience workplace violence in small retail and other businesses where the perpetrator is the business owner seem to face a particular risk as many of these women are unaware of any actions they can take other than to leave their jobs. For many women in service industries such as retail and hospitality, being treated badly by members of the public is a regular and distressing occurrence. While larger organisations will have processes in place to address this, many smaller ones do not.

Conclusions from findings of all stages of the research

Taken together, the research findings demonstrate that:

- women experience significant levels of violence in the workplace;
- this violence is common and affects women of all ages and in all industries and occupations;
- workplace violence against women is sometimes embedded in the culture of organisations whereby it appears to be legitimate to use violence to achieve ends;
- gender inequality in organisations and in society places women in particular positions of vulnerability to workplace violence;
- women workers who are in precarious employment or who are otherwise disadvantaged in the labour market are particularly vulnerable to experiencing workplace violence; and
- in hierarchical organisational structures and in many of the 'high-risk' occupational roles in which women work, violence may go unchecked.

The case studies also highlight the fact that, while individuals must take personal responsibility for their behaviour in the workplace, there is much that employers and others in workplaces can do to support them in this.

The impacts and costs of workplace violence

In telephone interviews four of every five women (79%) who experienced violence said their enjoyment of their job was affected 'a lot or 'somewhat'. They spoke of negative consequences including leaving their jobs, developing psychological disorders, experiencing relationship breakdowns and developing substance abuse problems.

Workplace violence experienced by women in the last five years led to:

- more than one in ten (11%) of all women surveyed taking sick leave; and
- 3.5 per cent of all women surveyed making WorkCover claim.

Additional costs to industry identified in this research and the literature include costs associated with staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced efficiency, decline in work quality, early retirement costs, counselling program costs, mediation or grievance proceedings, anti-discrimination action, and applications to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

In addition, economic and social costs to the community arising from the impacts of workplace violence are likely to include health care costs, and the innumerable costs associated with unemployment and family breakdown.

Women's responses to workplace violence

Data from the telephone survey show that only three of every five (398, 59%) women experiencing violence in the workplace over the last five years reported the behaviours to a manager or someone else in a position of authority in the workplace.

Several reasons for why women do not report workplace violence were identified including:

- women see violence as a 'normal' part of the workplace, it is unavoidable and there is nothing that can be done about it;
- they don't know what to do about it;
- they can be silenced by the experience of workplace violence as it is seen as integrally connected with the shame associated with other types of men's violence against women;
- some women fear they will lose their jobs if they report violence;
- some women lack faith in the system, often believing the violence is already known to and condoned by managers; and
- some fear that the process of reporting is likely to be traumatic.

While many women were reluctant to report workplace violence to managers or others in authority, they did take action to protect themselves. This included confronting the perpetrator, seeking informal support from a manager, colleagues or from family and friends, or leaving their job. How effective these actions are for women appears to vary considerably.

It appears that what is important for women is that the experience of violence is recognised and that there is some kind of action taken. The outcomes for women who do report violence varied and included:

- the organisations had 'good' processes or policies in place and the violence was addressed;
- the issues were not addressed including incidents where reports went no further than the initial person who took the report; and
- women were subsequently ostracised or 'punished' for reporting violence.

Women attributed the inadequacy of responses to their managers not knowing what to do, not having the skills to deal with it, not fully understanding the extent of the problem or just not wanting or caring enough to deal with it.

Several women spoke positively about their experiences of having cases of sexual harassment dealt with seriously and acted on in ways they were happy with.

Preventing violence against women in the workplace

An occupational health and safety approach to workplace violence assumes that once people are informed about proper practice and once policies are developed in a workplace, problems will be contained. This research and previous studies have shown this is not necessarily the case.

Recognition that there are barriers in many workplaces to the effective implementation of official procedures requires analysis of the personal and power politics in workplaces and broader societal relationships. Thus, while policies and guidelines for the prevention of workplace violence might exist, they will not be effective until women are able to take the issues up. Women who are particularly vulnerable in the workplace, including those in insecure forms of employment, are especially likely to face barriers to taking action to stop violence.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act it is an employer's responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. As this research has shown, if women do not see their employer taking this responsibility seriously, they will not take action themselves.

Women in the focus groups and interviews offered suggestions for action against violence including improved regulation of workplaces and workplace based and broader strategies such as education, training and support for employees and employers.

Indigenous women made many suggestions for improvements which could be made in their community organisations and in other organisations, mainly regarding areas of governance and management. Indigenous women's suggestions about how they could be supported in 'white' workplaces are also relevant for women in male-dominated environments and include mentoring programs to support young women into leadership and specific units addressing occupational health and safety issues.

Women put forward suggestions for improved regulation and monitoring of workplaces to ensure women could safely make complaints without fear of losing their jobs. They also suggested there should be stronger legislation to support workplace diversity

Support for women who are experiencing violence was a common suggestion. Some specific ideas put forward by women included confidential telephone support services and counselling appropriate to the needs of different groups of women; advice and support providing women with a range of options for action; and better support to take up occupational health and safety issues in the workplace.

Many ideas for broader educational interventions were suggested, including an education campaign for employees about their rights and for employers about their responsibilities. Some specific suggestions for workplace-based training were proposed, including:

- training for managers and others in workplaces including acceptable and professional workplace behaviour, performance management training, and diversity training; and
- specific workplace violence training including promotion of understanding of the broad dimensions and the forms violence can take in organisations (including for example the inappropriate use of workplace resources such as email).

Conclusion

Consistent with an emerging body of research, this study has found violence is a significant problem in many workplaces and that violence against women in the workplace is widespread and has significant costs for individuals, their families, the workplace and the community.

As is the case with violence against women in other public contexts, and particularly within families, a great deal of violence is not reported or resolved effectively. Women's vulnerability, including in their relationship to the perpetrators of violence, contributes to this. In many workplaces women fear they will lose their jobs if they take action in response to violence. This is especially the case for women in more precarious and low paid employment. In addition, many women's experience is that their workplaces do not have effective mechanisms for addressing violence.

The evidence presented in this report demands acknowledgment of women's experiences in the workplace and the development of specific interventions to respond to these experiences. Effective policy, training, prevention strategies and interventions at a statewide level, across industries and within workplaces will acknowledge women's experiences, recognising the non-physical as well as the physical forms of violence that occur in the workplace and the barriers that women face in responding to their experiences.

The Women's Safety Strategy

The Women's Safety Strategy sets out the Victorian Government's vision of a safer future for Victorian women. The Strategy represents a five year commitment by the Government to reduce the level of fear and violence against women in Victoria.

Key mechanisms for implementing the Women's Safety Strategy are three Statewide steering committees:

- The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Family Violence;
- The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Sexual Assault and Non-Relationship Violence Against Women; and
- The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace.

The Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace

The aim of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace is to improve the prevention of, and responses to, violence against women occurring in a workplace setting, including workplace violence, bullying and sexual harassment. This document reports on research undertaken by URCOT and Working Women's Health to identify and report on the extent, impact and costs of all forms of workplace violence against women in general, and also against particular groups of women. The research also investigated the characteristics of some health, manufacturing, education and retail sector workplaces with varying levels and forms of violence, and identified how women become victims of violence and why they respond in the ways they do.

To the knowledge of the members of the Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Violence Against Women in the Workplace this is the first research of its kind undertaken in Australia. While there have been several 'phone in' surveys, there has not been a survey about workplace violence targeting such a large, representative sample of women. In addition the collection of in-depth information about the experiences of specific groups of women who are potentially at a higher risk of workplace violence is unique. It enables a better understanding of how ethnicity, race and sexuality may intersect with gender in shaping women's experience of workplace violence.

Women, Work and Violence

Defining violence at work

While early research in the field of workplace violence focused on physical violence, evidence has emerged in more recent years about the harm caused by non-physical forms of violence, sometimes referred to as psychological violence, workplace aggression, emotional abuse or workplace harassment (Rogers & Chappell 2003, p. 4). Definitions of workplace violence have broadened markedly in recent years, and in the

international literature, definitions consistently include aspects that would be defined in Australia as psychological or emotional abuse. For example psychological violence is referred to internationally as mobbing, victimisation, harassment, abuse or moral harassment (Australian Public Service Commission 2004, Le Blanc & Barling 2004, Di Martino 2002, Barreto 2001, Davenport, Shwartz & Elliot 1999, Kiseker & Marchant 1999, Leymann 1999, Salin 1999, Stanton 1993).

Academics, policy makers, legislators, trade unions and international bodies all play a role in establishing definitions of workplace violence. While there are debates within and between these various groups about what exactly constitutes workplace violence, it is agreed that cultural, political and theoretical perspectives are important factors influencing definitions. The intended use of the definition, whether for research, legal or policy making purposes, is also important.

Consistent with international literature, the working definition of workplace violence against women adopted by the Steering Committee covers both physical and non-physical forms of violence. In this research, workplace violence against women is understood to include physical assault, threatening behaviour, bullying, verbal abuse, and various forms of harassment. Workplace violence usually occurs in a workplace setting, however acts of violence perpetrated by members of the workplace may also occur outside of the work setting. Violence may be perpetrated by a colleague or supervisor, a client or customer, a family member or a member of the public.

The specific behaviours identified as violence in this research include rape, robbery, wounding, grabbing, tripping, bullying, mobbing, intimidation, threats, leaving offensive messages, verbal abuse, swearing, insults, condescending language, squeezing, pinching, stalking (including phoning and sending emails), pushing, shoving, aggressive posturing, rude gestures, throwing objects, physical attacks, kicking, biting, punching, spitting, scratching, interfering with work tools and equipment, hostile behaviour, shouting, name-calling, innuendo, deliberate silence and repeated exclusion.

In this research, workplace violence against women is understood to include physical assault, threatening behaviour, bullying, verbal abuse, and various forms of harassment. Workplace violence usually occurs in a workplace setting, however acts of violence perpetrated by members of the workplace may also occur outside of the work setting. Violence may be perpetrated by a colleague or supervisor, a client or customer, a family member or a member of the public.

Existing knowledge about workplace violence against women

Research on workplace violence is non-gendered

Most literature tends to deal with workplace violence in a non-gendered way, avoiding critical analysis which considers the implications of gender, class, race and sexuality. Issues of power and identity are rarely included in the discussion on workplace violence. Rather, it encompasses generic information about definitions (see sources as discussed above), likely perpetrators (see, for example, Camardella 2002, Lord 1998, Neuman & Baron 1998, Elliott & Jarrett 1994), high risk occupations and workplaces and prevention strategies (Mayhew 2000, Grainger 1996, Kinney 1995). However, it could be argued that this literature is gendered in that it largely excludes women's experiences of

violence. Analysis tends to collapse women's and men's experience of violence.

Given the significance of gender in shaping social outcomes and experiences, and especially where women are vulnerable, a gender analysis can contribute to the development of important insights. Gender analysis refers to:

...the variety of methods used to understand the relationships between men and women, their access to resources, their activities, and the constraints they face relative to each other. Gender analysis provides information that recognizes that gender, and its relationship with race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, disability, and/or other status, is important in understanding the different patterns of involvement, behaviour and activities that women and men have in economic, social and legal structures (Canadian International Development Agency 2004).

When gender is incorporated in analyses of workplace violence, important issues emerge. Firstly, there is evidence that women have difficulty in labelling their experiences as violence and harassment (see Howie 2001, Hughes *et al* 1998, Giufree *et al* 1994, Thomas & Kitzinger 1994). For instance Giufree (1994, cited in Howie 2001) argues that women tend not to name their experiences as sexual harassment because they do not recognise that it is an actionable offence and because of fears of victimisation. Berryman-Fink (2001) says that most women deal with harassment through avoidance of the problem:

Women may discount the harassment by claiming 'that's just the way it is', or that 'boys will be boys'. Avoidance is often a conscious coping mechanism that women use.

There is also an issue with language and the types of language that women use to describe their experiences (Berryman-Fink 2001). Women may not identify what they have experienced as 'violence'. Given this, when gathering data it may be more appropriate to list behaviours than to ask direct questions about violence. This list could include, for example, tripping, grabbing, swearing, insults, condescending language, bullying, mobbing, intimidation, threats, leaving offensive messages, verbal abuse, rape, robbery, wounding, squeezing, pinching, stalking, pushing, shoving, aggressive posturing, rude gestures, throwing objects, physical attacks, kicking, biting, punching, spitting, scratching, interfering with work tools and equipment, hostile behaviour, shouting, name-calling, innuendo and deliberate silence.

Secondly, men are more likely to perpetrate violence against women in the workplace. In a study conducted by the community legal centre Job Watch, Barron (2000b) found that men were four to five times more likely to be the perpetrators, especially men over the age of 31. In almost half (47.8%) of reported incidents in which there was one perpetrator, that perpetrator was a manager and/or business owner. Put simply, an older male in a position of power was found to be the most likely perpetrator of the violence.

Another issue which has become apparent from research undertaken since the mid 1990s has been the intrusion of domestic violence into the victim's workplace. Women are overwhelmingly the victims (Johnson & Indvik 1996). Gardner and Johnson (1999) estimate that 13,000 acts of domestic violence against women occur in the American workplace every year.

Finally, most research makes no analysis of broader social, economic and political structures and the way in which these shape work and workplaces. In other words, the environment within which workplace life is formed is neglected. Thus most research implicitly assumes that an equal social structure exists in the workplace and ignores the implications of power relations which are shaped by ownership and managerial prerogative, and by external context.

Women's concentration in low paid, low status and precarious jobs

Some researchers do acknowledge women's position in the employment market (see Chappell & Di Martino 1998, Mayhew 2000, Perrone 1999). For instance Chappell and Di Martino highlight that women:

...are concentrated in many of the high risk occupations, particularly as teachers, social workers, nurses and other health-care workers, as well as bank and shop workers. The continued segregation of women in low-paid and low-status jobs, while men predominate in better-paid, higher status jobs and supervisory positions also contribute to this problem (1998, p. 44).

Further, Chappell and Di Martino's (2000) specify particular 'at risk' situations, including working in contact with the public in retail sales, social services, and in hotels and restaurants, along with the following situations in which women workers are often located:

- working alone (e.g. in small businesses, working from home), community care and other domestic workers);
- providing care, advice or training (e.g. nurses and other health workers, social and community workers, teachers);
- handling money or valuables (cashiers, bank and post office staff, sales assistants); and
- working with mentally disturbed, drunk or potentially violent people (mental health workers, hospitality workers) (Chappell & Di Martino 2000, p. 46, p. 68).

Perrone (1999) notes that women's entry into at-risk occupational sectors such as security and law enforcement means that they have increased exposure to greater levels of violence.

Immigrant women in particular are concentrated in the lower paid, poorer conditions end of the labour market. They are over-represented in blue-collar occupations such as trades, transport and labouring, making up 24.4 per cent of those working in these combined occupations, compared with the 15.1 per cent of all women nationally. Conversely, their representation in decision-making occupations, such as managers and professionals is below the national average (ABS 2001). In addition to being highly represented in at risk situations, immigrant women who speak languages other than English can be impeded from accessing vital services such as unions, information pertaining to legislation and occupational health and safety and adequate communication with their employers.

Some occupations have attracted more research than others, particularly nursing and health services. However, these studies tend to focus on external violence such as patient-health worker or customer-service provider violence, rather than the growing

incidence of manager-worker and worker-worker violence.

Chappell and Di Martino (1998, p. 128) and Cho (2000) make the connection that violence at work is a women's human rights issue, as well as an occupational health and safety issue. It is surprising, then, that there has been no analysis of the personal politics involved in violence. It takes courage and confidence for somebody to name violence as violence and to follow through with official procedures. Berryman-Fink (2001) says 'studies show that assertively confronting a harasser and formally reporting harassment are not the strategies that women most commonly use or say they would use in dealing with sexual harassment at work'. Chappell and Di Martino suggest that:

... many employees, and in particular women, may feel constrained to remain silent about their victimisation because of fear of reprisals being taken against them, including the possibility of losing their jobs. Unequal power relationships between employers and employees can undoubtedly influence reporting behaviours, and increase the risks of exploitation (1998, p. 32).

Thus, while the policies and guidelines for prevention of workplace violence might exist, they will not be effective until women feel empowered to take these issues up.

Women's work as safe work: failings of occupational health and safety research

It might have been expected that many of the issues surrounding women's experiences of violence in the workplace would have been uncovered and tackled by researchers in occupational health and safety. But occupational health and safety research has attracted some criticism for assuming a masculinist approach whereby women's work is assumed to be safe work, leading to a neglect of women's occupational health and safety concerns.

Writing from a Canadian perspective Henneberry notes:

The evaluation of risks and hazards in the workplace has focused on the more obvious and traumatic accidents and diseases associated with traditional male employment in the goods producing sector, even though women represent at least half of the labour force in Canada (1997, p. 6).

Taking an international perspective, Kemp (2001) comments on some of the difficulties of obtaining occupational health and safety research that takes into account women's occupational situation:

- Women's work is often 'casualised'. Under many national regulatory systems for accident reporting, casual workers (including home-based or informal sector workers where women predominate) are exempted. Thus injuries and illnesses go unrecorded;
- While men are more likely to be injured or killed in dramatic events in dangerous sectors like forestry and fishing, women in sectors like electronics or textiles suffer long-term insidious injuries such as musculoskeletal strains, low-level intoxications or cancers. To detect these

- requires detailed, systematic and costly monitoring over many years;
- Women tend not to report pain or discomfort for fear of dismissal. Stress-related ailments, to which women are more susceptible as many have less control in their jobs, are under-reported;
- Women are less likely than men to be unionised and protected by union influence. In countries where awards for safety performance are prevalent, women are likely to be intimidated into not reporting accidents or injuries.

Some countries do not have sex-disaggregated occupational health and safety data sets. Further, women workers tend to be unaware of their rights under existing laws and regulations.

Economic costs of workplace violence

Estimating the costs of workplace violence is not a simple task. Women's reluctance to report violence and the incompatibility of data sets, due in part to the use of different definitions and also due to the different purposes for which the various data are collected, contribute to the difficulty of making cost estimates.

There are a number of ways in which the monetary costs of workplace violence are estimated. The literature relating to costs refers to workers compensation claims including stress related claims, as well as factors such as staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced efficiency, decline in work quality, early retirement costs, counselling program costs, mediation or grievance proceedings, anti-discrimination action, and applications to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

However, even when all these costs are able to be estimated there are likely to be hidden costs which have not been fully taken into account. For example, findings of a Swedish study (Arnetz & Arnetz 2001) of workplace violence in the health industry suggest that this violence may have significant implications for the quality of care provided to patients or clients.

One estimate of the cost to Australian employers of bullying is between six and thirteen billion dollars each year when hidden and lost opportunity costs are included (Sheehan, McCarthy, Barker *et al* 2001). These researchers estimate that, even using very conservative figures, each case of bullying costs an Australian employer at least \$16,977.

Summary

Much research on workplace violence does not take the standpoint of gender which results in limited analysis of the implications of gender, class, race and sexuality on the occurrence of workplace violence, the types of violence that occur and women's experience of that violence.

Given the significance of gender in shaping social outcomes and experiences, a gendered analysis can result in important insights. Where gendered analyses of workplace violence have been undertaken significant findings emerge, for example:

- Women have difficulty in labeling their experiences as violence and harassment.

- Over-representation of women in low paid, low status and precarious jobs puts women at a higher risk of workplace violence. Immigrant women are particularly at risk as they make up a high proportion of women working in these areas.
- Other factors highly associated with women's work, such as: working alone; providing care, advice or training; handling money or valuables; and working with mentally disturbed, drunk or potentially violent people, may also put women at greater risk when at work.
- While more research has been done on some occupations, such as nursing, this work has often focused on violence perpetrated by those 'external' to the workplace (such as patients) rather than that perpetrated by supervisors and colleagues ('internal' violence).
- Violence against women at work is both a human rights and an occupational health and safety issue and as such it is surprising that there has been little analysis of the personal politics involved in the violence.
- Men are more likely to be the perpetrators of violence against women in the workplace, however, women also perpetrate this violence against other women.
- Domestic violence can intrude into the workplace.
- Occupational health and safety research has often focused on the more obvious accidents and diseases associated with traditional male employment, and has assumed that women's work is safe work, overlooking the power relationships that might put women more at risk, the casualisation of women's work and the fact that women are less likely to be unionised than men.

A gendered analysis leads not only to a better understanding of how and why violence against women occurs in the workplace, but also to an understanding that while some policies and guidelines for prevention of workplace violence might exist they will not be effective until women feel empowered to take these issues up.

There are significant costs associated with workplace violence and the estimated cost of bullying in Australian workplaces is between six and 13 billion dollars each year.

Assessing the Prevalence, Incidence and Impacts of Violence Against Women in the Workplace

Research questions

In light of the knowledge available from international and Australian sources, this research set out to address the following questions about workplace violence and women in Victoria:

- What is the type and frequency of violence in the workplace against women in general and against particular groups of women?
- How does the experience of workplace violence impact on women, including its impact on their lives outside of the workplace?
- What are the cultural and structural characteristics of sectors and workplaces where there is reported violence against women?
- What has supported or hindered women from reporting the violence, and receiving responses appropriate to their needs?
- What are the economic and social costs of workplace violence?

Study focus and approach

There are a number of methodological issues that are important to consider when asking women about their experience of violence.

In order to measure the prevalence (the proportion of women in the population who have experienced workplace violence) and the incidence (the proportion of women who have experienced violence in a given time period) of violence it is necessary to undertake a relatively large random survey of women to avoid the bias inherent in phone-in surveys such as those used in earlier research.

As the experience of violence is traumatic, many women are reluctant to talk about it. This means that an environment needs to be created in which women feel that they can speak freely and will be supported. Therefore, in addition to the telephone survey, the project used individual interviews and small group processes to collect more in-depth information about women's experiences of violence.

The methodology was designed to enable concurrent data gathering and validation. It is a grounded methodology, drawing on the work of Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Denzin (1970). The research was undertaken in several stages, described below.

1. Telephone Survey

A structured telephone survey (Appendix A) was constructed to include questions about experience of workplace violence and to gather individual demographic data.

From a computer-generated random sample of Victorian households listed in the White Pages telephone directory a total of 977 useable survey responses was collected. The survey was piloted with 100 women prior to conducting the main survey and some minor changes were made to some questions.

2. Literature Review

A literature review was conducted to identify current estimates of the incidence of reported violent acts in the workplace and current thinking in relation to workplace violence both internationally and in Australia. Material reviewed included research and data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), WorkSafe, employers, trade unions, and Job Watch. This material provided other sources of data to test the face validity of the findings of the telephone survey.

3. Focus Groups

Ten focus groups were conducted in metropolitan Melbourne and in regional Victoria to collect evidence about the cultural and structural characteristics of workplace violence, and on the likely economic and social costs. While some assessment of economic costs can be found in the literature, this is not so in relation to social costs. Furthermore, particular attention was given to hearing about the experiences of Indigenous women, lesbians and women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds (specifically Italian, Greek, Vietnamese, Chinese, Arabic and Turkish women).

4. Case Studies

Nine case studies of workplaces in five industries were undertaken to explore questions

about the character and incidence of violence experienced by women working in these industries. Aspects of the workplace or community which participants considered important in shaping workplace violence were also explored. Data for case studies were collected through eight focus group interviews with female employees and twenty-two interviews with managers, occupational health and safety representatives and coordinators, and industry and union representatives.

Initially it was proposed to select industry sectors based on the incidence of violence. However, the telephone survey indicated a similar incidence of violence across industries and, in light of this, case study selection was undertaken on the basis of a range of factors. The representation of women in the various industry sectors was a primary consideration, with other factors being the occupational profiles of industries and the apparent differences in the forms of violence experienced by women in different industries and workplaces. The final case study selection provides a high level of diversity of workplaces enabling analysis of cultural and structural contributors to violence.

A mix of regional, metropolitan, large and small worksites was included in the final selection which comprised:

- a university, a TAFE institute and a secondary school;
- a large multi-campus metropolitan hospital, a smaller regional hospital and a metropolitan community health centre;
- a large male dominated manufacturing company;
- a five star hotel and a large retail outlet (both with employees who have also worked in small businesses in retail customer service and/or a variety of hospitality roles); and
- a large welfare agency with employees from various medium and small worksites.

A key starting point for the research was recognition of the importance of gender and its intersection with race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, sexuality, disability, or other status in understanding women's experience.

Summary

This study was structured to explicitly collect data about violence against women in Victorian workplaces. A number of methods were used to ensure women's voices were heard. These include: a telephone survey of 977 women randomly selected from the telephone book; focus groups with women whose experiences may otherwise be overlooked (immigrant women, Indigenous women and lesbians); and case studies based on interviews with managers and staff in the health, manufacturing, education, welfare and hospitality industries.

Women's Experiences of Workplace Violence

The research provided insights into the ways in which the experience of Victorian women both match and differ from the picture arising from the literature. It offers a very solid basis for understanding the consequences of workplace violence, and offers directions for policy development. This section presents the findings from: the telephone survey which provides an overview of the patterns in workplace violence against women; the focus groups which provide specific insights into the experiences of particular groups of women; and the industry case studies which provide information about the contextual circumstances in which violence occurs.

Findings from the telephone survey

Who was interviewed?

The 977 women participating in the telephone survey had all been in the paid workforce within the last five years and were aged between 15 and 72 years. The youngest age group of 15 to 24 year olds was the smallest and made up just over four per cent of the total sample while 35 to 44 year olds, the largest age group, was 33.5 per cent of the sample. Just under 13 per cent of the women were born outside Australia and almost seven per cent spoke a language other than English as their first language. Three per cent of the women were from an Indigenous background.

Women's experience of violence

Women were asked about their experience of a range of types of violence, including physical attacks or threats, harassment, bullying, intimidation and victimisation. Table 1 provides detail of the violence directly experienced by women in the last five years and in the last twelve months¹. Note that women often reported experiencing more than one type of violence.

¹ Additional details are provided in Table B1 in Appendix B.

Table 1: Women's experience of violence in the workplace in the last 5 years and in the last 12 months by type of behaviour

Behaviour	In the last 5 years		In the last 12 months	
	No.	% of all women	No.	% of all women
Swearing or shouting	475	48.6%	164	16.8%
Hostile behaviours, aggressive posturing, offensive messages, rude gestures or name calling	456	46.7%	158	16.2%
Intimidation or threats	361	36.9%	116	11.9%
Deliberate silence or ostracism	343	35.1%	115	11.8%
Bullying or mobbing	219	22.4%	65	6.7%
Victimisation	123	12.6%	41	4.2%
Physical attacks, punching, kicking, squeezing or pinching	113	11.6%	49	5.0%
Spitting or biting	77	7.9%	33	3.4%
Racial harassment	30	3.1%	11	1.1%
Robbery	50	5.1%	18	1.8%
Sexual harassment	91	9.3%	21	2.1%
Wounding or Battering	39	4.0%	16	1.6%
Stalking	25	2.6%	7	0.7%
Rape	2	0.2%	0	0%
Totals				
Total who experienced violence	607	62.1%	194	19.9%
Total women in survey	977	100.0%		

As shown, data from the telephone survey of 977 women confirmed that the extent of violence in Victorian workplaces is considerable. In the last five years almost half the women surveyed experienced the following behaviours directed against them: swearing or shouting (49%); and hostile behaviours, aggressive posturing, offensive messages, rude messages or name calling (47%). More than one third experienced intimidation or threats (37%) and deliberate silence or ostracism (35%). One in five experienced bullying or mobbing (22%) and more than one in ten experienced victimisation (13%) and physical attacks such as punching, kicking, squeezing or pinching (12%). Just under one in ten experienced sexual harassment (9%); and spitting or biting (8%). Smaller numbers experienced robbery (5%), wounding or battery (4%), racial harassment (3%), stalking (3%), and rape (0.2%).

When all of these forms of violence are included, 62 per cent (n=607) of women surveyed had experienced workplace violence directed against them at some time in the last five years. In the last twelve months 20 per cent (n=194) of women experienced violence directed against them.

There does not appear to have been any change in the violent behaviours experienced by women in the last twelve months compared with the last five years. For all behaviours, one in five women who experienced the violent behaviour did so in the last twelve months.

In addition to the many women who experienced violence directed to themselves there were women in the survey sample who witnessed violence directed to others in their workplaces. In the last five years 49.5 per cent of women (n=484) had witnessed violence directed at others and in the last 12 months 16.1 percent of women had witnessed such violence (details are provided in Table 2).

Table 2: Women witnessing violence directed to others in the workplace in the last 5 years and in the last 12 months by type of behaviour

Behaviour	In the last 5 years		In the last 12 months	
	No.	% of all women	No.	% of all women
Swearing or shouting	200	20.5%	55	5.6%
Hostile behaviours, aggressive posturing, offensive messages, rude gestures or name calling	244	25.0%	79	8.1%
Intimidation or threats	165	16.9%	54	5.5%
Deliberate silence or ostracism	139	14.2%	51	5.2%
Bullying or mobbing	158	16.2%	59	6.0%
Victimisation	113	11.6%	47	4.8%
Physical attacks, punching, kicking, squeezing or pinching	102	10.4%	38	3.9%
Spitting or biting	62	6.3%	28	2.9%
Racial harassment	72	7.4%	28	2.9%
Robbery	49	5.0%	20	2.0%
Sexual harassment	67	6.9%	30	3.1%
Wounding or Battering	44	4.5%	15	1.5%
Stalking	29	3.0%	8	0.8%
Rape	7 ²	0.7%	1	0.1%
Assault leading to death	4 ³	0.4%	1	0.1%
Sub-totals				
Women who witnessed violence directed to others (and who also experienced it themselves)	414	42.4%	142	14.5%
Women who witnessed violence directed to others (and who did not also experience it themselves)	70	7.2%	15	1.5%
Total women witnessing violence directed to others	484	49.5%	157	16.1%
Total women in survey	977	100.0%	977	100.0%

Workplace violence is common and affects women of all ages and in all industries and occupations

Workplace violence is not confined to some types of workplace or experienced only by women in some occupations. Women in all occupations and industries experience

² Included here are women who witnessed rapes in psychiatric and other residential care and corrective services settings and two women who witnessed rapes of colleagues by others in their workplaces.

³ Four women witnessed assaults leading to death: one was working in the hospitality industry, two in health care and the fourth was in community services. In the first three cases the perpetrators and victims were clients. In the fourth case the perpetrator was a client and the victim was the woman's co-worker. The two women in the health industry and the woman in community services reported that they witnessed violence frequently in their jobs.

violence. In this study the likelihood of experiencing violence was similar for women regardless of their industry of employment (see Table B2 in Appendix B).

While the type of violence directed against women did not show any overall variation by industry, women working in industries where they were likely to deal with the public, especially where they were providing care, for example in aged care and special school settings, were more likely to experience violence directed against them by members of public than were other women. This is discussed later in this section.

Women of all ages experienced violence in the workplace, and, in the current study, the likelihood of experiencing violence did not vary significantly with age (see Table B3 in Appendix B). Nor did it vary according to whether women lived and worked in regional Victoria or metropolitan Melbourne.

Workplace violence occurs often in many workplaces

Violence occurs often in many workplaces, with 96 per cent of the 194 women with experience of such violence in the last twelve months saying the violence occurred on multiple occasions. More than one in three women (39%) who experienced workplace violence said it occurred at least weekly and one in six women said it occurred daily (see Table B4 in Appendix B).

Individual experiences

Women provided a great deal of detail about their experience of violence during the telephone interviews.

(The worst experience was) a disagreement with my boss. He said 'No, do it my way'. He grabbed me by my arm, twisted me around and pushed me against the wall and said 'Do it my way or you won't want to do it at all'. He said he didn't want women working with him anyway... ..he used to play mind games (Sharon, Manufacturing).

A chap jumped in (my taxi) and pulled out a knife and took the car. I haven't driven since (Rita, former taxi driver, Transport).

I had unwanted physical approaches from my manager. He kissed me and touched me and told me I'd lose my job if I didn't participate. It went on and off for six months (Peggy, Health).

I'm working in aged care and when you try to get someone out of bed they might try to push you away (or) scratch you and there are incidents of biting etc. You certainly get a lot of verbal abuse as well (Sarah, Community Services).

The deliberate silence (was the worst). It was over a long period of time. Because of the way things were going on in this workplace I actually ceased employment, I quit. I felt the silence was a way of cutting me out of what was happening (Lesley, Finance & Insurance).

(Team leader) would just verbally abuse me all the time and make me feel small constantly. This was the beginning of the break down of my mental health (Deirdre, Government Administration).

Probably the yelling and screaming (is the worst). It makes me feel embarrassed as he does it in front of everyone (Pam, Communication Services).

For many women violence is a part of the everyday experience of work

A significant proportion of violent behaviour occurring in the workplace may not be recognised by women as violence. While more than 69 per cent of the women surveyed said they had experienced or witnessed specific acts of violent behaviour in the last five years, (as outlined in the tables above) on initially being asked whether they had either experienced or witnessed 'violence' in the workplace only 39 per cent of women said they had (see Table B5).

In the telephone survey women reported that they had experienced behaviours such as rude gestures, shouting, name calling, hostile behaviours, aggressive posturing, innuendo, ostracism, intimidation, swearing and deliberate silence and that they found these behaviours distressing and undermining. These were the behaviours women were least likely to recognise as violence with up to half of the women experiencing them initially saying they had not experienced workplace violence. In addition, approximately 40 per cent of women experiencing bullying and a similar proportion experiencing sexual harassment initially said they had not experienced violence (see Table B5 in Appendix B).

Two issues arise from this:

- There are workplaces where violence is normalised, and some women experience violent behaviours as a part of their everyday work experience. In these women's workplaces violence is normalised and even seen as intrinsic to getting the job done. The case studies later in this section provide some insight as to how this happens, and why some women find it more distressing than others.

One woman's experience provides an illustration:

Everyday occasions, swearing, intimidation, shouting. I work in a factory packing. The (managers) are very rude to us all the time. I started over 20 years ago and cannot remember the first time. It has always been like that I think (Justine, Wholesale Trade).

- There are women who have difficulty labelling violent behaviour as such. That many women have difficulty labelling their experiences as violence and harassment has been noted in other studies, along with concerns that it may lead to women avoiding the problem (Berryman-Fink 2001). Women in this study frequently used language which minimised the violent behaviour they described. For example one woman said her supervisor 'lost it' regularly. When asked, she explained that this entailed him screaming at her and throwing things around the room.

Most violence in the workplace is 'internal'

Internal occupational violence is that:

...committed by individuals who have, or have previously had, an employment

relationship with the organisation. The incident may involve (a) a 'one-off' physical act of violence that results in a physical or emotional injury; or (b) some form of harassment or bullying that may continue over time (Mayhew and Chappell, 2001a, p. 3).

This study found most (60%)⁴ workplace violence experienced by women is 'internal' occupational violence (see Table B6 in Appendix B for a detailed breakdown)

'Internal' workplace violence accounted for more than three-quarters of the violence experienced by women in the property and business services, manufacturing, accommodation, cafes and restaurants, and industry sectors (see Table B6).

Table B7 (in Appendix B) shows that across all industries, people employed in the workplace who were identified as responsible for committing the violent behaviour were:

- Managers, supervisors or business owners in 41 per cent of incidents of internal violence. The majority of these (58%) were male or, where the violence was perpetrated by a group, most were men.
- 'Other workers' in 59 per cent of incidents with 45 per cent of them being male or 'mainly male' where violence was perpetrated by more than one person. More than a third of perpetrators were female and in one in eight cases (12%) the violence was carried out by both males and females.

In relation to the type of violence, most types were perpetrated by people employed in the workplace, with the exception of:

- stalking, which was perpetrated by people
- 'external' to the workplace in half of all instances; and
- wounding, battery, punching spitting, rape or assault leading to death were perpetrated by people 'external' to the workplace in the majority of instances.

'External' violence was most commonly perpetrated by customers, clients, students and patients and, sometimes, by family members of these groups -for example parents of school students and relatives of hospital patients (see Table B7). Women working in the health, community services, education and government sectors were those most likely to experience violence perpetrated by members of the public (see Table 5). Women in these industries included many who were providing direct care to sick or disabled people, involved in a welfare provision or other human services role (including employed by government and community agencies such as Centrelink workers, housing officers and child protection workers), or were working as teachers or teachers' aides in schools and special education settings.

The experiences presented below are fairly typical of those described by women in the telephone interviews

Internal workplace violence

My senior supervisor was very angry at me one day and was yelling at me in the office and threw paper at me. He thought that something had gone wrong and blamed me for it (Briony, Business and Personal Services).

⁴ The relevant information about perpetrators was not provided for 36 incidents. Thus, while 60 per cent of all violence was reported to be perpetrated by people employed in the workplace (internal workplace violence) this was 62 per cent of all violence for which the perpetrator was identified (400 of 641 experiences of violence).

I'm a nurse and some of the other work colleagues often single someone out and treat them badly. Sometimes they will deliberately not speak to someone or will gossip behind their backs (Robyn, Health).

I had a boss who would use silent posturing to make his point and show his power. He would do it to everyone to show his power. It can be intimidating and bullying of a sort (Gillian, Education).

External workplace violence

The client that spat at me. I was trying to assess him as part of the procedure. He became so aggressive and abusive when he didn't meet the eligibility guidelines (Ella, Community Services).

Often the residents become angry, frustrated and then violent towards other staff and also patients (Karen, Community Services).

I was the teacher in a private girls' school. A parent didn't think his child was doing as well as he thought she should be doing academically. And he thought that it was my mistake and he lost his plot, threatening me and saying I would 'know about it' if his child didn't do better (Angela, Education).

Students' behaviour towards the teachers – just verbal abuse. The teachers try to discipline them and there's just no hope with some kids and there's only so far they (the teachers) can go. We get the occasional parent who'll be quite hostile. Once a mother got really angry at me and shouted, swore and made me feel intimidated (Jennifer, Education).

I work with children that have behavioural problems and they can often get aggressive. They begin swearing and shouting, punching, kicking, spitting etc (Briony, Community Services).

As shown in Table 2 many women witnessed others experiencing violence in the workplace. Mostly, these were other employees, although women also witnessed non-employees experiencing violence in their workplaces, including the following:

- children and students (witnessed in schools);
- customers (witnessed in retail, cafes, business services);
- patients (witnessed in health); and
- clients and nursing home residents (witnessed in community services, including the aged care sector).

Gender of perpetrators and victims

In other research it has been noted that, despite data indicating women's greater vulnerability to workplace violence, the gendered nature of violence is often ignored by theorists and policy makers (see, for example Barron 2000a, Lee 2002). In this study men were more likely than women to be identified as the perpetrators of violence. Male, or mainly male (when more than one person was involved) perpetrators were responsible for 54 per cent of incidents of violence experienced by women (see Table B7 in Appendix B). Female or mainly female perpetrators were responsible in 29 per cent of cases, and both males and females were responsible in 14 per cent of cases. These findings are consistent with those of a Victorian study by Job Watch (Barron 2000b) in which men were reported to be the perpetrators of workplace violence in the majority of cases.

As noted above, women are also perpetrators of workplace violence against women. In attempting to explain this, Leymann (1996 p. 175, quoted in Lee, 2002 p. 207) notes that one structural consequence of work life for many workers is that 'men mostly work together with men, and women with women'. However, these specific incidents cannot be divorced from the overall pattern of power relations within workplaces. In a discussion of bullying in the workplace in Britain, Lee remarks: 'given that gender fundamentally organises private and public life in the UK, it is highly unlikely that abuse of organisational power would not be gendered' (2002, p. 207).

Experiences of specific groups of women

The telephone survey data did not indicate, any overall differences in the likelihood of experiencing violence for different groups of women (for example, women of different age or cultural or language background) although, given the small numbers of women in some of these groups, no firm conclusions should be drawn from this. However, women's described experiences do show that violence does differ for different groups of women and, for some women, it is inextricably linked to a broader context of discrimination.

The following experiences illustrate this:

I can't remember (the worst incident). Lots of my disgusting experiences in the workplace have been to do with my age and gender. I was made fun of in front of students and that was very disappointing (Serena, mature-aged worker, Education).

I work in a big factory with a whole lot of clashing cultures (One ethnic group) hates the others so people are having a go at each other all the time. I'm a process worker and I've seen people throwing things (Juliet, Manufacturing).

(The worst experience was) when I was told to get rid of a worker of (Asian) origin because the clients complained they couldn't understand her. (There was) bullying by the CEO (Chief Executive Officer) and another person toward me to get rid of the other girl (Anne, Health).

One girl was victimised. She was a lesbian. Someone in charge had it in for her (and) made out she was lazy. It made it hard for everyone (Karen, Community Services).

Summary

The extent of workplace violence against women in Victorian workplaces is considerable. When all forms of violence considered in this study were included, 62.1 per cent (n=607) of women had experienced violence at work within the last five years. This violence included being sworn at or shouted at, hostile behaviours, being intimidated or threatened, bullying, victimization, physical attacks, racial harassment, sexual harassment, robbery; wounding or battering, stalking, and rape.

Many of these women also witnessed violence perpetrated upon others in their workplaces. In total 484 women (50%) reported witnessing violence directed towards others in the workplace.

Workplace violence against women occurs often in many workplaces with 96 per cent of those experiencing violence at work in the last 12 months reporting it had occurred on multiple occasions.

Violence against women in the workplace is often normalised and for many women such violence is part of everyday work and is not recognised as violence. While 69 per cent of women had experienced or witnessed the behaviours listed above, only 39 per cent of women in the sample initially identified that they had experienced or witnessed 'violence'.

Supervisors and colleagues perpetrate more violence against women in the workplace than those 'external' to organisations (such as clients, customers, students, patients and family members). In 40 per cent of cases managers, supervisors or business owners perpetrated the violence and in 60 per cent of cases the perpetrator was another worker.

Men were more likely to perpetrate violence against women in the workplace, however a significant proportion of women (29%) were also perpetrators.

Immigrant women

Many immigrant women, while contending with the same problems faced by other women in the workplace, may also face a language barrier that impedes their access to vital services such as unions and occupational health and safety information. It also makes effective communication with their employers difficult. In addition, with many immigrant women in low-skilled jobs (ABS 2001), they are more likely to be employed in positions where they are relatively powerless in the workplace.

In the majority of cases of violence reported by immigrant women in the focus groups, the perpetrator was a manager or supervisor. The violence women reported often occurred in combination with, or was supported by, open environments of discrimination, and included:

- being made a scapegoat or blamed for the actions of others;
- being harassed and stalked;
- being punished financially;
- being forced to work at an unreasonable pace;
- being subject to intensive surveillance; and
- being sexually harassed and subjected to sexually-based putdowns.

Women reported a number of situations in which the expression of racialised

violence was quite open. For example, one woman working in a nursing home spoke of a resident shouting at her to go away and get someone who can speak English. The woman was not supported by her colleagues who also derided the way she spoke: 'I noticed that my colleagues laughed at my accent either in front of me or behind me – that made me feel so humiliated'

Other women working in a clothing factory spoke of open discrimination against newly arrived women. Specifically, the supervisor would scream at them to work faster, which served to instil fear in them. The women, concerned about losing their jobs, worked faster. The women stated that this group produced more garments than other workers but were paid less as they were paid under a different system. In another factory the manager was reported to favour the staff from her own background, while treating workers who were not from the same ethnic background in a negative way.

Some acts of violence, including financial punishment, harassment, intensive surveillance and sexual harassment, were perpetrated in private (for example, in situations that were not visible to other workers) and were combined with attempts to isolate the victim and individualise the issue. In some cases, these acts of violence happened in conjunction with, and were supported by, the more open environments of discrimination and expectations of overwork. Women experiencing isolation in workplaces where violent cultures were normalised, reported feeling vulnerable and alone.

Indigenous women

For Indigenous women a broader context of racism and disadvantage in access to work and to career advancement underlies the experience of violence. One woman explained that she found it 'hard to distinguish between violence and racism, when this is in the workplace'.

Women in the focus groups talked about physical and verbal intimidation, threats and attacks that they had experienced both in 'white' organisations and in Indigenous community organisations. The underlying reasons for violence in each case were explained differently. In 'white' organisations the women saw violence as an extension of being treated as 'second class' people. In community organisations it related to the power that some individuals, because of their family background, have over others.

Indigenous women also spoke of how high levels of violence in Indigenous communities had an impact on the way that violence in the workplace is perceived and dealt with:

A lot of families in our community have had a lot of violence for a long time. If you haven't got a role model in your family to say it isn't OK, the violence escalates and people think it's OK.

Women spoke of this resulting in a situation where violence can become accepted as part of community life. In community organisations, clients may perpetrate violent acts on workers, especially those in the front line of service delivery who are often young women. Some of the women believed that it also affected the way in which organisations responded to acts of violence within them, either from clients or between staff.

One group talked about a case where bullying had been occurring in the community and then spilled over into the work group. It was not clear how the matter would be dealt with – as a work issue, a community issue or both. The women explained that, because of the close knit nature of Indigenous communities and their family based structure, when something happens, everyone gets to hear about it, and there is little confidentiality or privacy, especially for women.

For younger women, problems such as sexual harassment can be particularly difficult to address, because this may mean addressing it with an older man who may hold considerably more power in the community as well as the workplace.

Lesbians

A common experience arising in discussions with some immigrant women and with many Indigenous women and lesbians was the feeling of being different to others in the workplace and being made to feel this difference. Women from these groups often felt alienated from colleagues and managers in workplaces where they had to also battle ignorance about themselves and their communities to gain acceptance.

I cried for three days and took sick leave. I needed to get my head together. I wasn't able to do my job properly because my authority had been undermined – and the other managers wouldn't work with me (Woman who was ostracised at work after her colleagues found out she was a lesbian).

Lesbians participating in the research reported regular workplace experiences of harassment and discrimination directed at them because they were lesbians. Generally the women experienced subtle and 'difficult to prove' behaviours, with one young woman saying '(it's) the indirect stuff that makes you think that you are going insane'

Common experiences reported in the groups included:

- being asked uncomfortable personal questions including questions about their sexuality, with the details of their sex lives holding a fascination for heterosexual people that was invasive;
- having sexuality being made fun of and joked about at work;
- being excluded from social events; and
- experiencing subtle changes to conditions and benefits after declaring their sexuality. For example, a woman talked about being given awards and bonuses for exceeding targets prior to disclosure of her sexuality and not afterwards. Others spoke of changes being made to rosters so that they were given the roster times that no-one else wanted.

Whilst some women who reported experiencing bullying did not attribute these behaviours directly to their sexuality, their sexuality provided an additional dimension to their experiences. For example, -when they were bullied, references to their sexuality were made by the person bullying them.

In some instances the way in which organisations responded to women's complaints served to increase the women's feelings of being different or 'second class'. One woman recounted her experience:

I worked in an organisation where it took three years for the organisation to respond to complaints from female staff about a male supervisor and kick him out. He had a fixation with lesbians, with what we did, and was always trying to get others involved in turning against us in the office – it felt sick.

One of the biggest concerns for the lesbians was the extent to which they felt able to be open about their sexuality without being afraid that something negative would happen as a result. Women in the groups described a sense of trepidation about revealing their sexuality to their colleagues. One woman said 'I withdraw to make sure I'm protected'. Another commented: 'I am guarded about who I come out to. You have to be strong and secure to come out, like having a shield around you.'

Summary

Focus groups were held to further investigate experiences of specific groups of women – immigrant women, Indigenous women and lesbians.

Immigrant women are over-represented in low paid, low status occupations, they may be unfamiliar with their rights and may also face a language barrier that impedes their access to services and information. All these factors increase their vulnerability to workplace violence. Most violence reported by immigrant women was perpetrated by a manager or supervisor and often occurred in open environments of discrimination. Women experienced isolation in workplaces where violent cultures were normalised and reported feeling vulnerable and alone.

For Indigenous women, a broader context of racism and disadvantage in access to work and to career advancement underlies the experience of violence. Violence in 'white' organisations was seen as an extension of being treated as 'second class' people, while in Indigenous community organisations it related to the power that some individuals, because of their family background, have over others.

Indigenous women also spoke of how high levels of violence in some Indigenous communities and the close knit nature of Indigenous communities and their family based structure could impact on the way that violence in the workplace is perceived and dealt with. For younger women, problems such as sexual harassment can be particularly difficult to address, because this may mean addressing it with an older man who may hold considerably more power in the community as well as the workplace.

Lesbians spoke of feeling alienated from colleagues and managers in workplaces where they battled ignorance about themselves and their communities to gain acceptance. Women reported regular workplace experiences of harassment and discrimination directed at them because they were lesbians. One of the biggest concerns for the lesbians was the extent to which they felt able to be open about their sexuality without being afraid that something negative would happen as a result.

Industry case studies

The four industry studies presented here were selected on the basis of a number of factors. Health and education are both female dominated industries with many women employed in the 'high-risk' occupations identified by Chappell and Di Martino (1998), such as teaching and nursing. In the retail and hospitality sectors many women work in low-paid and less secure part-time and casual jobs. The male dominated manufacturing sector presents very different work environments for women, both for those on the factory floor and for women in professional roles.

Health industry: Hierarchies and 'internal' workplace violence

This industry study draws on information collected from managers and staff of a large multi-campus metropolitan hospital, a smaller regional hospital and a community health service.

The primary concerns raised by managers in health care organisations were about violence perpetrated against staff by patients and other members of the public. However, in the main, female employees spoke about 'internal' violence.

Intimidation happens all the time as a nurse, as well as rude doctors (and other) people above you. Other workers have ganged up and humiliated a girl. (She) was really distressed and it really upset me. Four of her colleagues went to her office and stood over her. They totally intimidated her because of the perception she wasn't pulling her weight (Rose, Health).

In both a large metropolitan hospital and in a community health care organisation women painted pictures of workplaces in which bullying among staff and by supervisors and managers is not uncommon. Many also believed that this 'internal' violence was more difficult to manage and more distressing or 'damaging' than the violence perpetrated by non-employees.

Violence from clients or patients who are in pain, sick, disturbed or disadvantaged in some way was expected and often tolerated. The professional staff in one group - some who were managers and others who provided direct care - said they felt protected and removed from this violence by the 'difference' their professional role gave them in these instances.

Staff violence mainly took the form of verbal intimidation and bullying, particularly from people in operational management roles. In this female-dominated industry in many cases, the perpetrator/s and victims are women.

As in other workplaces women were reluctant to report violence perpetrated by other staff members. Staff in one organisation reported a 'culture of guilt' in which they are specifically focused on looking after others, but will not do things to look after themselves. The women believed staff placed their own needs secondary to the needs of the clients and patients who depended on them for care, and they saw this as a contributing factor to women's reluctance to report violence.

In the metropolitan hospital and in a second hospital in regional Victoria, managers identified the funding context as a contributing factor to internal workplace violence. They see hospitals as having to operate under severe financial pressures to meet targets and with increasing requirements on managers to be accountable for performance. These managers spoke of bullying and harassment as stemming in part from these pressures, which they see as starting at the top with what one manager called a 'blaming and punishing approach to health care organisations' by government funding bodies.

Hierarchies of violence, based mainly on occupation and seniority, exist throughout the health care organisations. In one hospital, staff bullying was a particular problem for staff in administrative areas, and for personal service assistants (PSAs) who 'get all the really awful jobs on the wards'. Nurse to nurse violence was seen to reflect nurses' experiences during training when they were bullied by doctors and senior nurses. Bullying behaviour was then repeated to junior nurses. Managers say that

despite bullying occurring, few nurses formally complain about doctors, and PSAs do not complain about nurses.

Women in two organisations agreed that, in general, there was a lack of professional respect across disciplinary boundaries. However, in areas where cross-disciplinary teams were in place, the situation was reported to be better. Likewise, where there were younger doctors and nurses there was more respect for each other's expertise.

Lack of relevant training for managers and doctors was seen as a factor contributing to the problem of internal violence in health organisations. Some divisions within the case study organisations had experienced rapid growth which was seen to have been poorly planned or managed leading to work overload and a lot of pressure on managers and staff. In one hospital the focus on clinical matters in doctors' training, huge workloads and rotations across multiple campuses meant there was little time for training to address workplace issues.

(They) accuse you of having not done something -they take you about three feet from the rest of the staff and let you have it with the staff listening. Naturally it affected me - you're too scared of going back to work -it makes you nervous when having to work (Marjorie, Health).

(The worst incident was) harassment of a colleague by a doctor and then me speaking up about it. I got intimidated for speaking up for others. I was treated very aggressively. I was then verbally abused. It's about another woman who was harassed verbally and sexually. It was very bad. I felt intimidated, frustrated and angry. And also I did go to the person above me and I didn't get much support from them (Colleen, Health).

I think the worst incident (I have experienced) is the first one I described because that person wasn't sick. He was a doctor, a professional person and (he was) intimidating his colleagues This is worst than any other (incidents of violence) that have happened as part of the job (Eleni, Health).

In a recent review of existing research on violence in the health sector, Mayhew and Chappell (2001a) conclude that 'internal' violence is most common in organisations where dominant/subordinate hierarchical relationships exist and that this results in significant productivity losses. These researchers suggest that within the health care system, nurses may be more at risk of 'internal' violence for three reasons: (1) they are predominantly female, (2) they may be oppressed by physicians, administrators and by more senior nursing staff and colleagues; and (3) they may perceive themselves to be comparatively powerless (Mayhew & Chappell 2001b).

The findings in this small health industry study are consistent with Mayhew and Chappell's thinking. Other factors in internal violence appear to be external pressures on management and staff and neglect of workplace behaviour issues in training, especially perhaps in the professions. This study also suggests that, while physical forms of violence -such as is sometimes perpetrated by patients or clients in care – are highly visible and unlikely to go unreported, internal non-physical violence may be widespread and often does go unchecked.

On the factory floor, the normalisation of violence in male-dominated workplaces

This case study draws on information collected from human resources managers and staff (including process workers and a group of women employed as professionals in production management roles) in manufacturing workplaces.

Women working in the manufacturing sector provided a picture of workplaces in which men predominate both on the shop floor and in management. Many women talk about having to get used to a working environment which is rough and tough and in which yelling, shouting and swearing are part of the normal way of communicating. When things go wrong problems are dealt with by yelling at people.

It's just how it is.

Just a lot of yelling and roaring. It was just how the workplace was. He was a really hostile boss... Mainly at the women though. (Sheila, Manufacturing)

Many women don't complain about the culture, seeing it as part of working in the industry. Some women in a group of female professionals in a large manufacturing company said that while they would prefer other ways of communicating, the yelling and swearing was not really an issue for them. These women were prepared to confront colleagues and tell them to stop when behaviour went 'over the line' They were able to 'give back heaps' and some women saw this as necessary to build respect with the men and to maintain the authority of their role. However, they stressed that their positions in the organisation provided them with power that women on the shop floor don't share. This group identified the lack of women in senior management as a factor making it difficult to get their experiences heard and their issues placed on an agenda for organisational change.

Some others, including many women process workers said the yelling and swearing was not acceptable to them. They felt uncomfortable and distressed but believed they just had to put up with it. Women reported incidents where they felt threatened and were very upset, particularly where yelling and swearing was accompanied by other intimidating and violent behaviour.

Several women spoke of verbal attacks between women who are peers in the workplace. Differences between them relating to age, length of service or ethnicity, seemed to provide a focus for the attacks.

Women's experiences suggest that sexual harassment is common in some male-dominated work environments. They report sexual comments, innuendo and sexual jokes from colleagues and from supervisors and managers. Most women regard sexual harassment as unacceptable and report that they have taken action in response to it. These actions include confronting the individual, trying to avoid the perpetrator(s) and reporting the behaviours to the boss.

Often when you walk into your work area men will make comments to or about you. I try and just ignore it. These comments are personal about appearance what you're like etc, not work related at all... They make comments that make you feel embarrassed (Carole, Manufacturing).

When women felt threatened, behaviours were seen as 'over the line' or 'beyond putting up with'. Women spoke about 'threatening' and 'intimidating' behaviours from bosses and supervisors including being called '_____ idiots', having the quality of their work put down in front of others, being disciplined in front of others, being forced to undertake tasks in particular ways, and in one case having a forklift driven directly at a woman. In addition, women reported threats of reduced shifts or the sack if they didn't do what they were told or in the way they were told. One woman who worked as a process worker in a clothing factory spoke of the openness with which the manager punished the women workers for taking sick leave:

If we were sick it was a nightmare to ask for a day off. He wouldn't care if you had a doctor's certificate... next day he would make us suffer for it by giving us hard jobs to complete and screaming at us to finish them.

A common experience was that managers responded poorly or not at all when concerns were raised, with women suggesting some managers had little idea of their responsibilities or of the impact of certain behaviours.

At one manufacturing work site, an in-house support group for women was an important forum for professional women to share experiences and this provided women with a means of identifying patterns in their experiences and an understanding of what was and was not acceptable. In this workplace human resources managers had concerns that there was a lack of dialogue about the subtle, embedded inequities and a need to get women to see what the issues are for them working in male-dominated environments.

While the experiences of the professional women and those on the factory floor differ in many ways, together they show how entrenched and normalised violence can be in some male-dominated environments. Women working in such workplaces come to believe they have to put up with a certain level of discomfort, and those in the most vulnerable positions may even be in the situation where they feel fearful and threatened a lot of the time.

Education industry

The education industry study draws on information from group interviews with staff working at a university, staff and managers in a TAFE institute and teaching staff at a secondary school. It also draws on information from interviews with employer and management representatives from three peak bodies, a manager in a special school setting, staff of two education industry unions and women participating in the telephone interviews.

One group of women working in a tertiary education campus in regional Victoria said they work in a 'culture of violence' where violent behaviour is perpetrated and modelled 'from the top down'. These women had experienced or witnessed very senior staff members yelling, swearing, finger pointing, prodding in the chest and blaming employees. They said this occurred regularly in meetings and other public situations and that it was imitated by others in the organisation. The women, who work in professional, technical, middle management and administrative roles, said the violence is gendered in that it was perpetrated by a group of very senior managers who are all male.

In this workplace and a second institution where violence occurred further down the organisational hierarchy, it took the form of bullying and victimisation. Women saw this behaviour as being closely associated with work pressures and overwork. Union representatives with experience across the industry concurred that these factors play a role in bullying and that it is also supported by the existence of a, 'highly exploitable' mainly female, casual workforce and a shrinking resource pool.

None of the women in the first group felt able to take any action to address the violence perpetrated by senior managers. In addition to the fact that the perpetrators were some of the most senior people in the organisation, women saw the potential for retaliation against them as too great. They believed they could be eventually 'forced out' of their jobs if they made a complaint.

For the women working in a tertiary education campus in regional Victoria, not only were there very limited employment opportunities in their occupations in the region, but the senior managers also had a great deal of influence in other institutions in the town through, for example, board and local government involvement and networks of 'mates'. The women feared they would be unable to get any work in the area and that their families may face retaliation as well.

Who's doing the bullying in school?

There was much commonality about the stories women told of their own and colleagues' experiences of internal violence in school settings. Many women in a secondary school group, along with women participating in the telephone survey, spoke of subtle intimidation and undermining by senior staff and principals, with sometimes dire consequences. Another common story was of staff being bullied and ostracised by individuals or groups of colleagues.

Women gave accounts of senior staff engaging in behaviour intended to exclude individuals. These included victimising someone by ignoring their communications and requests, not responding to them in public, or chastising or belittling them in front of students and colleagues. In addition there were accounts of senior staff and colleagues using body language and gesturing to intimidate or threaten others. These, often ongoing, behaviours were commonly reported to be directed towards either a younger female staff member or someone who had questioned or challenged the perpetrator. Middle-aged female teachers reported being subject to victimisation where they were perceived by principals as being 'past it, not flexible, not performing' or 'difficult' and likely to challenge a principal and his or her decisions.

The impacts, especially on younger women can be significant, and a commonly reported response to this type of treatment is that they leave the school.

When the principal is the bully, many people we spoke to in the industry believed contributing factors are poor management skills or a need by people under pressure to 'assert their authority'. Several people mentioned the pressure on principals to respond to the needs and demands of a range of stakeholder groups who may have competing interests. This was cited as a factor in some cases where principals were reportedly reluctant to take action against parents who had perpetrated violence against school staff (discussed further below). It was also seen as contributing factor to the high level of pressure on principals leading to bullying of staff.

Women often did nothing in response to being bullied, intimidated or victimised as they feared the consequences or because they believed the behaviour was 'too subtle' and 'too hard to prove'. As one woman noted: 'I don't think anyone is keen to pursue anything in regards to issues that are emotional because you can't measure them. They only pursue it if it's physical'. Another said: 'Sometimes we don't complain about things and therefore we reinforce the culture ourselves'.

A few women stressed how difficult it was to take action or support others to do so due to the likelihood of retaliation. As one woman explained: 'it nearly broke my colleague who knew what was going on and decided to fight for me alongside the union'. A few who did pursue matters did so through their union and in general these women reported successful outcomes whereby some formal action was taken to deal with the perpetrator.

Responding to student and parent violence

It was threatening and intimidating. It was scary but the schools inaction was worst. No-one was made accountable (Teacher attacked by parent).

Teachers and other women working in special school settings spoke of violent behaviour perpetrated by students as 'part of the job'. While accepting this behaviour as something that could not be prevented many women said it was distressing, sometimes frightening and affected their enjoyment of their work a lot. These women spoke of going home with cuts and bruises from attacks by students, sometimes on a daily basis.

In general, women in special school settings reported that there were procedures in place to minimise violence, for example, incidents were recorded, strategies were discussed and staff were provided with debriefing and, if required, counselling. In other education settings this is not always the case and many women experiencing violence felt that its impact on them was not acknowledged or responded to effectively. One secondary school teacher was told by her manager: 'If he hits you just ignore it. It is just attention seeking behaviour'. Another teacher was threatened by a teenager who said he would get a gun and shoot her. What upset this teacher the most was that her colleagues' responses were that 'it was just talk' and that she should 'get over it'.

In schools and also in early childhood settings violent behaviour perpetrated by parents was also experienced. Again, concerns women expressed about such incidents were often about lack of process and, in secondary schools, principals' willingness to 'let it go'.

One woman who was a senior teacher in a non-government school was advised not to tell anyone about the threats and verbal abuse she endured from a parent who was dissatisfied with the school. She was told to keep other teachers away from the parent and she felt very nervous about being responsible for protecting others.

In all the education industry groups the role of increasing employment insecurity was raised as a factor contributing to women's reluctance to report workplace violence for fear of retaliation and job loss. As illustrated above women are often those who are least powerful in the workplace and therefore most vulnerable to internal violence. The fear of job loss is heightened for women living in regional communities where labour markets are limited, especially if perpetrators are influential.

The study above also demonstrates how the distress and injury women experience as a result of violence perpetrated by those external to the workplace (in these cases students and parents) is being worsened as managers fail to respond appropriately.

The retail and hospitality sectors: Working in small business and dealing with the public

The information presented here is drawn from group and individual interviews with staff and managers working in a large five star hotel, a large retail outlet and with women working in cafes, restaurants and small retail outlets. It also draws on information from the telephone interviews.

Reports of violence experienced by women working in the retail and hospitality sectors fall into two distinct groups. Firstly, and particularly among women employed in small businesses, are reports of internal violence perpetrated by managers and

business owners. Several women reported that the verbal abuse and threats of the sack were just some aspects of the offensive and violent behaviour they experienced on a regular basis. Women spoke about much of the violence as something not unusual or extraordinary in the workplaces where it occurred. They spoke of 'bosses' who yelled, screamed and threw things (including at staff) on a daily basis. While some women responded by leaving their jobs others put up with the behaviour out of fear of becoming unemployed.

Much of the violence seems also to have been expressed publicly and openly and included women being made scapegoats or humiliated in front of co-workers or customers. One woman reported that the owner of the food store where she worked as a cashier regularly screamed at the staff, sometimes blaming them in front of customers for things that were not their responsibility, and who once demanded that a cashier apologise to a customer in front of co-workers in order to 'make a point'. Another woman said the manager in a delicatessen treated her in a 'hostile and aggressive' manner including pushing her into a cool room and chastising her. This woman said:

I was just nervous because I was new and she was bossy and grumpy all the time. I was just scared of her and I felt like I wasn't any good at my job. I was going back to the workforce after 25 years. In front of customers if I got some thing wrong she would say 'she can't help it, she's blonde'

Another spoke of her experience as a waiter:

I was working in a restaurant and the owner came down on me like a ton of bricks. He really upset me and said that I would never make it in anything that I do. He would yell at me in front of customers. He used to chase (me) out of the restaurant screaming at me.

Women who had worked in kitchens, whether in small restaurants and cafes or in larger workplaces, spoke of sexual harassment being common in these environments. The responses of some younger women working part-time were to leave their jobs and look for something else. For several young women in apprenticeships the only solution was to 'live with it' with one commenting 'that's just what it's like'. The experience below is typical of those of the women who spoke to us.

Sexual harassment (is the worst behaviour I've experienced). Male chefs, female waitresses. Discrimination, insinuating certain things to female staff, making comments about how they look, men making comments to each other about what they'd like to do to the girls.

A group of young women working in a large five star hotel were more likely to say any internal violence they experienced was perpetrated by their peers, took the form of verbal abuse and resulted from short tempers due to 'the pressures of the job'. The pressures they identified were the hotel's 24 hour rotating shifts and the need to maintain 'good customer service' and be calm and polite when confronted by rude, abusive and/or demanding customers. When subjected to verbal abuse by members of the public, these women, unlike many who worked in smaller businesses in particular, were able to leave the situation and call upon a supervisor to handle it.

The second type of violence mentioned by women was perpetrated by customers and other members of the public. Women told of experiences of being verbally abused and threatened by customers, something which was very frightening for

many, especially if the woman was working alone.

One guy abused us over prices it was awful he just went off throwing his arms around. He called me a bitch because something was overpriced. I was really shaken. He was an angry man. I haven't had to deal with him since. He hasn't been back. I've had my spells on anti-depressants (My husband and I) wonder why we're in business sometimes. We have to keep going though.

Women who experience workplace violence in small retail and other businesses where the perpetrator is the business owner seem to face a particular risk as many of these women are unaware of any actions they can take other than to leave their jobs. These examples also demonstrate that for many women in these service industries, being treated badly by members of the public is a regular and distressing occurrence.

Summary

The four industry studies were selected on the basis of a number of factors. Health and education are both female dominated industries with many women employed in the 'high-risk' occupations identified by Chappell and Di Martino (1998), such as teaching and nursing. In the retail and hospitality sectors many women work in low-paid and less secure part-time and casual jobs. The male dominated manufacturing sector presents very different work environments for women, both for those on the factory floor and for women in professional roles.

The findings of the health industry study are consistent with Mayhew and Chappell's (2001a) conclusion that organisations with dominant/subordinate hierarchical relationships are likely to experience internal workplace violence resulting in significant productivity losses. Other factors in internal violence appear to be external pressures on management and staff and neglect of issues of workplace behaviour issues in training, especially perhaps in the professions. This study also suggests that, while physical forms of violence - such as is sometimes perpetrated by patients or clients in care - are highly visible and unlikely to go unreported, internal non-physical violence may be widespread and often does go unchecked.

While the experiences of professional women and process workers on the factory floor differ in many ways, together they show how entrenched and normalised violence can be in some male-dominated environments. Women working in such workplaces come to believe they have to put up with a certain level of discomfort, and those in the most vulnerable positions may even be in the situation where they feel fearful and threatened a lot of the time.

Apparent in the education industry examples is the role of increasing employment insecurity whereby women are reluctant to report workplace violence for fear of retaliation and job loss. Women are often those who are least powerful in the workplace and therefore most vulnerable to internal violence. The fear of job loss is heightened for women living in regional communities where labour markets are limited, especially if perpetrators are influential. The school study demonstrates how the distress and injury women experience as a result of violence perpetrated by those external to the workplace (in these cases students and parents) is being worsened as managers fail to respond appropriately.

Women who experience workplace violence in small retail and other businesses where the perpetrator is the business owner seem to face a particular risk as many of these women are unaware of any actions they can take other than to leave their jobs.

For many women in service industries such as retail and hospitality, being treated badly by members of the public is a regular and distressing occurrence. While larger organisations will have processes in place to address this, many smaller ones do not.

Conclusion

Taken together, the research findings from each of the methods used in this project demonstrate that:

- women experience significant levels of violence in the workplace;
- this violence is common and affects women of all ages and in all industries and occupations;
- workplace violence against women is sometimes embedded in the culture of organisations whereby it appears to be legitimate to use violence to achieve ends;
- gender inequality in organisations and in society places women in particular positions of vulnerability to workplace violence;
- women workers who are in precarious employment or who are otherwise disadvantaged in the labour market are particularly vulnerable to experiencing workplace violence; and
- in hierarchical organisational structures and in many of the 'high-risk' occupational roles in which women work, violence may go unchecked.

The case studies also highlight the fact that, while individuals must take personal responsibility for their behaviour in the workplace, there is much that employers and others in workplaces can do to support them in this.

Impacts and Costs

The scale of violence against women in the workplace is significant. What are its consequences? This Chapter brings together the data from the telephone survey and the interviews and focus groups and considers the impacts and costs of workplace violence against women.

Workplace violence has diverse consequences for women

In telephone interviews, women who had experienced or witnessed violence were asked whether it had affected their enjoyment of their job 'a lot', 'somewhat' or 'not at all'. Four of every five women (79%) who experienced workplace violence and half of the women (50%) who witnessed it said it affected their enjoyment of their job 'a lot' or 'somewhat' (See Table 3).

Table 3: The extent to which violence has affected women's enjoyment of their jobs.

How much violence affected enjoyment of job	Women who experienced or witnessed violence in the last 5 years					
	Experienced ¹		Witnessed only		Total	
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total	No.	% of total
A lot	255	42.0%	10	14.3%	265	39.1%
Somewhat	225	37.1%	25	35.7%	250	36.9%
Not at all	117	19.3%	30	42.9%	147	21.7%
No information provided	10	1.6%	5	7.1%	15	2.2%

Total	607	100%	70	100%	677	100.0%
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Includes women who both experienced and witnessed workplace violence.

Women spoke of a range of negative consequences including leaving their jobs, developing psychological disorders, relationship breakdowns and substance abuse.

I had high self-esteem when I started this job. I really thought it would be something I would be good at then I started to doubt that I would be any good. I just felt small, I was devastated (and) it made me question whether I was right for the job. I felt humiliated (Maryanne, Community Services, ostracised and locked in a cupboard by colleagues).

I was a mess. I'd promised that I would give 2 weeks' notice if I was to leave but I couldn't go back. It affected my family as well. Even to this day if I see the (woman) out (in the street) I have to run and hide. I can't face her (Petra, Personal Services, experienced aggressive behaviour from employer).

It was very frightening. Intimidating. I had to sneak away from work and was too scared to return (Raylene, Community Services, subject to physical and verbal abuse from a person in care).

In discussing the impact of the violence women spoke of feeling distressed and angry, of losing confidence in their ability to undertake their work and of feeling humiliated and powerless. Sometimes the violence generated fear, shock, anxiety and panic. Some women felt fearful while at work, and others reported that their mental and emotional health was affected, in significant ways, sometimes for long periods of time.

Some women had to continue to work with the perpetrator of the violence. One woman was frightened about being left alone with the perpetrator, another said 'whenever she came near me I got very nervous and scared' and another maintained 'whenever he was around me I was panicking'.

Immigrant women spoke of feeling powerless and burdened because they couldn't talk about their experiences. Some women felt particularly isolated because, although they had been able to talk about their situations in a small group of women, they did not feel that they could discuss it elsewhere. They worried that they would be blamed, gossiped about, misunderstood, and that their reputations in the community would be compromised.

Women living in smaller communities reported violence in the workplace could impact on many relationships outside the workplace, for the women and for their families.

Sick leave and health implications

More than one in ten (11%) of all women surveyed had taken sick leave at some time in the last five years because of violence in the workplace. This is just under one in six (15.4%) of all women who experienced workplace violence over this time period (See Table 4).

Table 4: Sick leave taken because of violence in the workplace.

Sick leave taken because of violent behaviour/s	In the last 5 years			In the last 12 months		
	No.	% of women who exp'd &/or witn'd violence	% of all women	No.	% of women who exp'd &/or witn'd violence	% of all women
Yes, took sick leave	104	15.4%	10.6%	34	16.3%	3.5%
No, did not take sick leave	559	82.6%	57.2%	173	82.8%	96.5%
Information not provided	14	2.0%	1.4%	2	1.0%	<0.1%

¹ includes women who both experienced and witnessed workplace violence.

Comments by two women who took sick leave illustrate some of the effects of violence:

The whole experience left me feeling inadequate and I lost my confidence completely and became very anxious (Sheree, Community Services, bullied by a supervisor).

I took leave. I became very stressed, bursting into tears, anxiety attacks. I wasn't the only one (Jessica, Community Services, experienced intimidation and verbal abuse by a supervisor over a long period of time).

WorkCover

Of all the women surveyed 3.5 per cent (n=34) had made a WorkCover claim because of the impact of violence in the workplace in the last five years. This was one in twenty (5.6%) of all women who experienced violence over the last five years. Of the thirty women who proceeded with a WorkCover claim twenty two (73%) were successful.

Table 5: WorkCover claims made by women experiencing violence in the workplace.

WorkCover claims made because of violent behaviour/s	In the last 5 years			In the last 12 months		
	No.	% of women who experienced violence	% of all women	No.	% of women who experienced violence	% of all women
Yes, made claim	34	5.6%	3.5%	9	4.6%	0.1%
No, did not make claim	628	N/A	N/A	185	N/A	N/A
Information not provided	15	N/A	1.5%	2	N/A	<0.1%

As illustrated by the comment below, the impacts may be very severe and long term:

I was put on a 'go back to work program' but the meeting (in my workplace) was with the two women who had victimised me, and me with no support person. I cracked after this and had to go into a psychiatric ward. I was in and out for a while. Now I do not work (Cath, Health).

Morale and productivity

In the survey, and in the case studies, women also spoke of the broader impacts of violence on their workplaces, beyond those affecting individual women at work. In

particular, where internal workplace violence was ongoing or where organisations were seen to respond poorly to violence women spoke of detrimental effects on the wider workforce and on productivity. One woman who witnessed a co-worker being ostracised commented that '(it) made it difficult to work in a cooperative way. We all just stopped working together'. Another woman with a similar experience said 'it creates an atmosphere of distrust and a lack of respect for each other. It's also very bad for getting things done'.

Likely economic and social costs

The evidence presented in this study suggests the costs of workplace violence against women are significant. Costs to industry include the very obvious costs of sick leave and WorkCover claims associated with incidences of violence as well as costs associated with the factors identified here and in the literature such as staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced efficiency, decline in work quality, early retirement costs, counselling program costs, mediation or grievance proceedings, anti-discrimination action, and applications to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

In addition, economic and social costs to the community arising from the impacts discussed in previous sections are likely to include health care costs, and the innumerable costs associated with unemployment and family breakdown.

Summary

In telephone interviews four of every five women (79%) who experienced violence said their enjoyment of their job was affected 'a lot' or 'somewhat'. They spoke of negative consequences including leaving their jobs, developing psychological disorders, experiencing relationship breakdowns and developing substance abuse problems.

Workplace violence experienced by women in the last five years led to:

- more than one in ten (11%) of all women surveyed taking sick leave; and
- 3.5 per cent of all women surveyed making a WorkCover claim.

Additional costs to industry identified in this research and the literature include costs associated with staff turnover, absenteeism, reduced efficiency, decline in work quality, early retirement costs, counselling program costs, mediation or grievance proceedings, anti-discrimination action, and applications to the Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

In addition, economic and social costs to the community arising from the impacts of workplace violence are likely to include health care costs, and the innumerable costs associated with unemployment and family breakdown.

Women's Responses to Workplace Violence

Whether or not women take action and the type of action they do take in response to the violence at work will vary depending on the nature of the violence experienced, the organisation's culture and processes, the perpetrator's position in the organisation (where violence is internal), the individual's level of confidence in the processes available, and their confidence in themselves. This section expands on the information presented earlier from the focus groups using the findings from the telephone survey and the interviews.

Why don't women report violence?

Data from the telephone survey shows that only three of every five women (n=398, 59%) experiencing violence in the workplace over the last five years reported the behaviours to a manager or someone else in a position of authority in the workplace. The outcomes of reporting are varied and these are discussed following consideration of why women do not report workplace violence.

Violence as a 'normal' part of the workplace

Some women, including many who took no action in response to violence, thought that the violence was unavoidable, was inherent in the work or in the workplace culture, and that acting on it, including reporting it, would have no effect or would be detrimental to them personally. These women tolerated the discomfort and distress caused by the violence

(The main way it affected me was) just a negativity towards process (Managers) say 'come see us come see us' but it's not as simple as that. You know they are not going to listen ... You lose hope in their leadership (Nerida, Finance).

Some immigrant women did not realise they could complain and perceived the violence to be a normal part of the work. They noted that workplace violence silences women, making them reluctant to make complaints, advocate for their rights, or join with a union.

Violence is silenced

Some women made conceptual links between workplace violence and violence against women that is perpetrated in non-work contexts, seeing the silencing of workplace violence as being integrally connected with the shame associated with other types of men's violence against women.

Immigrant women in focus groups mentioned they had not taken action for fear that they would be blamed for the behaviour themselves, particularly if the violence was sexualised.

Violence is silenced in my culture – you can't talk about it. Men don't see women as equals but as second level people. They think they have the right to scream at women and women have to keep quiet. Same with domestic violence – women keep quiet about this too. Also when women have complained nothing is done about it.

Other women stated that they, 'didn't want to cause a drama' or that they didn't know what support was available to them to take action.

Fear of job loss

Many women cited fear of losing their jobs or of other reprisals as the reasons for not taking action on violence. Women made comments such as 'women are too scared to talk or make any complaints 'we put up with it because need money', or '. One petrol station attendant who was in her forties said she hadn't reported the violence that she experienced because she had found it difficult to get the job she had and was worried that if she lost her job, as an 'older woman', she would again not be able to find work. Another woman who worked for an office temping agency spoke of how

a woman could get 'a reputation as a troublemaker' if she filed complaints of violence.

Will reporting be effective?

In many instances women were reluctant to report violence because they had little faith in the system to get anything done. Women's lack of faith in the efficacy of reporting was sometimes linked to their and others' past experiences and, in many cases, to the belief that managers or supervisors already knew what was going on and did nothing. In many cases supervisors or managers were the perpetrators of the violence and in small businesses there was no-one to report to as these individuals were 'the boss'. In larger organisations managers were seen as tending to 'stick together' and therefore to be unlikely to take up the complaint. The latter is perceived to be the case by women at all levels in organisations. For example a lesbian woman in one focus group who is in a senior role in her organisation felt that she could not take up an issue because of her manager's close relationship with the person in authority who would deal with it.

Some women who were very aware of their rights were also aware that their organisations lacked adequate processes for dealing with violence such as bullying. For instance women in the lesbian groups agreed that the existence of diversity policy at government level provided a formalised pathway to follow when things did not go right, but that policies were not always well implemented. Interventions at the level of organisational culture were also required.

In contrast some of the immigrant women and other women in lower paid or precarious employment reported that: even if there is legislation, women don't use it because going to court doesn't work; government and legislation have no control over what happens in workplaces; people in authority are not interested in workplace violence, are not supportive and not trained or experienced in dealing with it; and reporting violence will not achieve anything.

A final deterrent to reporting is a fear that the process itself is likely to be traumatic.

Actions other than reporting

While many women were reluctant to report workplace violence to managers or others in authority, they did take action to protect themselves. This included confronting the perpetrator, seeking informal support from a manager, colleagues or from family and friends, or leaving their job. How effective these actions are for women appears to vary considerably as the following examples illustrate.

One woman in an immigrant women's focus group was being harassed and stalked by her factory owner boss. She became so disturbed that she eventually left her job without finding a new one. This created conflict with her husband because she hadn't told him about the violence out of fear that he would be angry, and therefore couldn't explain to him why she had left.

Another woman who worked as a personal carer arranged for a transfer away from her team leader, which was granted. Eventually the team leader was dismissed for bullying staff and clients and the woman returned to the work site.

One young woman felt she had no choice but to change her career direction after being intimidated by other workers when she was on a professional work placement:

It hurt me quite deeply. I felt sadness and anger, all that. I didn't enjoy working there at all. It turned me off the industry (Rachel, Community Services).

What happens when workplace violence is reported?

The outcomes for those women who report violence vary. Some women said that their organisations had 'good' processes or policies in place, that the violence was addressed, and there was some sort of satisfactory outcome. These included having the perpetrator removed to another area, the woman being moved, and the provision of counselling for those involved. In several cases women said managers resolved the complaint without specifying what the outcome had been. What appears to be important for women is that the experience of violence is recognised and that there is some kind of action taken.

Other women said the issues were not addressed. A small number of women participating in the telephone survey said they were subsequently ostracised or 'punished' in some way for reporting the incident to a manager, or for taking other actions to prevent further violence within the organisation. A couple of women who initially made complaints said they took no further action because they were worried that the perpetrators would lose their jobs.

Women in some of the focus groups reported the violence but found that their reports went no further than the initial person who took the report. One woman who worked at a large retail chain store reported the sexual harassment she had experienced at the hands of her male co-worker to the manager. In response, she was told that the report could go no further because the company would get a bad record and that it would look as if the training and support offered to staff wasn't adequate. She stated that this made the perpetrator more confident and he started treating other women in the same way.

Other women spoke of inadequate responses to violence; responses which left them feeling that their experiences were not acknowledged at all, not taken seriously and, in a few situations, regarded as humorous. One woman who was verbally abused by several customers was told 'don't take their anger on, it's not your problem'. Women attributed the inadequacy of responses to their managers not knowing what to do, not having the skills to deal with it, not fully understanding the extent of the problem or just not wanting or caring enough to deal with it.

Several women spoke positively about their experiences of having cases of sexual harassment dealt with seriously and acted on in ways they were happy with. In all but one of these cases the women had been harassed by colleagues who were at the same level in the organisation, and in the other by a client with a disability.

Snapshot: An effective response to workplace violence

A woman working in a direct service provision role in the community sector had an encounter with a sexually aggressive client whose behaviour was very threatening. When the client returned to the workplace after hours, the woman worker felt seriously threatened, and contacted her manager, who was no longer at work. The manager's immediate response was to make sure that the woman was safe and had some support at home that evening. She told the woman worker that she didn't have to work with the client again and made arrangements to meet with the woman the following day to decide what action to take.

The following day, the woman and her manager met to determine what to do, including considering banning the client. In the end, the worker decided that this was the best option, and wrote to the client explaining this and referring him to another service. The manager contacted the other service provider and explained the situation. The letter was put on the client's file, and the file was coded with a warning sticker to alert other workers.

What was important for the woman worker was that her manager's response was immediate and appropriate. The manager had acknowledged the seriousness of the impact of the incident on the worker which validated her feelings and experience. The worker said that the fact her manager suggested banning the client made her feel valued and safe in the organisation. Working with her manager to determine a solution, and being able to part of its implementation left the woman feeling in control of the outcomes of the incident.

In this organisation, there was a recognition that individuals will respond to, and are affected by, violent incidents in different ways. There was recognition that there are different levels of skill in tackling violent individuals and dealing with violent situations, as well as different levels of awareness of what constitutes violence. However, individuals were encouraged to report incidents so that patterns could be identified and interventions made to the design of work and work locations. There was also the recognition that effective occupational health and safety strategies require specialist support in their development and implementation, and that this needs to be acknowledged in funding arrangements.

What can be learnt?

These examples suggest that factors which appear to be important in providing an effective response include:

- shared understandings of what constitutes violence and unacceptable behaviour;
- flexibility within the systems for responding to violence, including options around the types and levels of interventions;
- interventions at both individual and systemic levels, which are communicated to those involved and staff more broadly;
- availability of internal and external debriefing and mediation services;
- victim involvement in determining what happens following an incident, and
- adequate resourcing for the development of OHS strategies, and a recognition that such development requires specialist support and additional funding.

The next section discusses how these learnings can be put into practice.

Summary

This section considered women's actions in response to the experience of workplace violence.

Data from the telephone survey show that only three of every five (398, 59%) women experiencing violence in the workplace over the last five years reported the behaviours to a manager or someone else in a position of authority in the workplace.

Several reasons for why women do not report workplace violence were identified

including that:

- women see violence as a 'normal' part of the workplace, it is unavoidable and there is nothing that can be done about it;
- they don't know what to do about it;
- they can be silenced by the experience of workplace violence as it is seen as integrally connected with the shame associated with other types of men's violence against women;
- some women fear they will lose their jobs if they report violence;
- some women lack faith in the system, often believing the violence is already known to and condoned by managers; and
- some fear that the process of reporting is likely to be traumatic.

While many women were reluctant to report workplace violence to managers or others in authority, they did take action to protect themselves. This included confronting the perpetrator, seeking informal support from a manager, colleagues or from family and friends, or leaving their job. How effective these actions are for women appears to vary considerably.

It appears that what is important for women is that the experience of violence is recognised and that there is some kind of action taken. The outcomes for women who do report violence varied and included that:

- the organisations had 'good' processes or policies in place and the violence was addressed;
- the issues were not addressed including incidents where reports went no further than the initial person who took the report; and
- women were subsequently ostracised or 'punished' for reporting violence.

Women attributed the inadequacy of responses to their managers not knowing what to do, not having the skills to deal with it, not fully understanding the extent of the problem or just not wanting or caring enough to deal with it.

Several women spoke positively about their experiences of having cases of sexual harassment dealt with seriously and acted on in ways they were happy with.

Preventing Violence Against Women in the Workplace

An Occupational Health approach Ensuring action is taken

Whilst there are concerns about the limitations of the occupational health and safety approach to workplace violence and bullying, one advantage of this approach is that it attempts to stop the problem from happening in the first place by eliminating hazards to the health and safety of employees caused by work. Thus the occupational health and safety literature and research are characterised by a focus on:

- prevention strategies which aim to limit risk;
- employee health and safety;
- responsibilities of employers; and
- identifying factors that increase workplace violence.

Such an approach assumes that once people are informed about proper practice and once policies are developed in a workplace problems will be contained. However, this research and previous studies have shown this is not necessarily the case.

Berryman-Fink (2001), for example, notes that 'studies show that assertively confronting a harasser and formally reporting harassment are not the strategies that women most commonly use or say they would use in dealing with sexual harassment at work'.

However, as noted in the earlier discussion of the literature, an occupational health and safety focus also often assumes a gender neutrality and fails to address the underlying systemic issues. For instance Crawford (1997) argues both that many roles in organisations have bullying built into their structure and that bullying is a symptom of organisational dysfunction.

Chappell and Di Martino suggest that,

... many employees, and in particular women, may feel constrained to remain silent about their victimisation because of fear of reprisals being taken against them, including the possibility of losing their jobs. Unequal power relationships between employers and employees can undoubtedly influence reporting behaviours, and increase the risks of exploitation (2000, p.27).

Recognition that there are barriers in many workplaces to the effective implementation of official procedures requires analysis of the personal and power politics in workplaces and broader societal relationships. Thus, while policies and guidelines for the prevention of workplace violence might exist, they will not be effective until women are able to take the issues up. Women who are particularly vulnerable in the workplace, including those in insecure forms of employment, are especially likely to face barriers to taking action to stop violence.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act it is an employer's responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. As this research has shown, if women do not see their employer taking this responsibility seriously, they will not take action themselves.

What women would like to see happen?

Women in the focus groups and interviews offered suggestions for action against violence including improved regulation of workplaces and both workplace-based and broader strategies such as education, training and support for employees and employers.

Indigenous and other community organisations

Indigenous women made many suggestions for improvements which could be made in their community organisations, mainly in relation to areas of governance and management. These suggestions have the potential to prevent violence in a broad range of community managed organisations and include that:

- information about where existing workplace policies against violence are effective should be widely disseminated and adopted by organisations;
- selection and training of members of boards of management ensure they have appropriate skills and experience to undertake their roles; and
- provision of appropriate occupational health and safety budgets is made to enable organisations to tackle issues including violence.

Indigenous women's suggestions about how they could be supported in 'white' workplaces are also relevant for women in male-dominated environments and include:

- mentoring programs for young Indigenous women to assist them move into leadership positions;
- that there should be individuals within organisations whose role it is to guide and assist new Indigenous workers; and
- following the example of one government department, Indigenous units could be established to address occupational health and safety issues for Indigenous staff.

Improved regulation

Some women suggested that improved regulation was required and that this was necessary to ensure women could safely make complaints without fear of losing their jobs. Suggestions included that:

- there should be better monitoring of workplaces by external bodies;
- workplace visits should be undertaken by regulatory bodies so that workers' experiences are heard and understood; and
- regulation should include mechanisms for addressing violence at the workplace level rather than requiring women to go to court.

Support for workplace diversity

Women also suggested that stronger legislation and policy are needed to force companies to support diversity in their organisations.

Support and education

Support for women who are experiencing violence was a common suggestion and some specific ideas put forward by women include that: confidential telephone support services dedicated to workplace violence should be available for all women, not just for union members;

- telephone advice and counselling should be appropriate to the needs of different groups of women and include multilingual services, services for lesbians and Indigenous services;
- advice and support should include providing women with a range of options rather than only focusing on taking legal action; and
- support should be provided within WorkCover to assist workers better understand the processes they need to go through, and to support them whilst they deal with occupational health and safety issues in the workplace.

Many ideas for broader educational interventions were suggested, including the following specific suggestions:

- an education campaign for employees about their rights and for employers about their responsibilities;
- awareness raising at workplaces about Indigenous issues and how they relate to specific work and workplaces;
- a poster campaign giving visibility to women in workplaces (to be inclusive of lesbians rather than to single them out as different from other women); and
- encouraging and promoting Indigenous young women within communities, not just young men.

Workplace-based solutions

Some specific suggestions for workplace-based training were proposed by women, including:

- training for managers and others in workplaces including on acceptable and professional workplace behaviour, performance management training, and diversity training; and
- specific workplace violence training including promotion of understanding of the broad dimensions and forms violence can take in organisations (including for example the inappropriate use of workplace resources such as email).

Some women thought that no amount of training would be adequate to change the behaviours of some managers and that additional action would be required. Additional suggestions included that all workplaces should have people who are trained on the topic of workplace violence and that communication and solidarity between workers should be encouraged rather than environments of isolation and union-breaking.

Summary

An occupational health and safety approach to workplace violence assumes that once people are informed about proper practice and once policies are developed in a workplace problems will be contained. This research and previous studies have shown this is not necessarily the case.

Recognition that it takes courage and confidence for somebody to name violence as violence and to follow through with official procedures requires some analysis of the personal and power politics in workplace and broader societal relationships. Thus, while policies and guidelines for the prevention of workplace violence might exist, they will not be effective until women feel empowered to take the issues up.

Women in the focus groups and interviews offered suggestions for action against violence including improved regulation of workplaces and workplace based and broader strategies such as education, training and support for employees and employers.

Indigenous women made many suggestions for improvements which could be made in their community organisations and in other organisations, mainly regarding areas of governance and management. Indigenous women's suggestions about how they could be supported in 'white' workplaces are also relevant for women in male-dominated environments and include mentoring programs to support young women into leadership and specific units addressing occupational health and safety issues.

Women put forward suggestions for improved regulation and monitoring of workplaces to ensure women could safely make complaints without fear of losing their jobs. They also suggested there should be stronger legislation to support workplace diversity

Support for women who are experiencing violence was a common suggestion. Some specific ideas put forward by women included confidential telephone support services and counselling appropriate to the needs of different groups of women; advice and support providing women with a range of options for action; and better support to take up occupational health and safety issues in the workplace.

Many ideas for broader educational interventions were suggested, including an education campaign for employees about their rights and for employers about their responsibilities. Some specific suggestions for workplace-based training were proposed, including:

- training for managers and others in workplaces including on acceptable and professional workplace behaviour, performance management training, and diversity training; and
- specific workplace violence training including promotion of understanding of the broad dimensions and forms violence can take in organisations.

Conclusion

Consistent with an emerging body of research, this study has found violence is a significant problem in many workplaces. The research shows that violence against women in the workplace is widespread and has significant costs for individuals, their families, for the workplace and for the community.

As is the case with violence against women in other contexts, and particularly within families, a great deal of violence is not acted upon effectively. Women's vulnerability, including their relationship to the perpetrators of violence, contributes to this. In many workplaces women fear they will lose their jobs if they take action in response to violence. This is especially the case for women in more precarious and low paid employment. In addition, many women's experience is that their workplaces do not have effective mechanisms for addressing violence.

The evidence presented in this report demands acknowledgment of women's experiences in the workplace and the development of specific interventions to respond to these experiences. Effective policy, training, prevention strategies and interventions at a statewide level, across industries and within workplaces will acknowledge women's experiences, recognising the non-physical as well as the physical forms of violence that occur in the workplace and the barriers that women face in responding to their experiences.

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Appendix A: Telephone Survey Sript

URCOT SCRIPT Introduction

Hi my name's ___ and I'm calling from ___. We're doing some research on behalf of the URCOT (the Union Research Centre on Organisation and Technology) about women's experiences in the workplace.

The survey takes about 10 minutes to complete and we'd really appreciate your feedback.

All your answers will be entirely confidential and no one will be individually identified.

If now is not a good time, I can make a time to call you back?

Record appointment day, time & preferred contact number

Record details of interviews to be done in CALD groups

Warm Up Questions

What do you think is the biggest issue for women in the workplace today? RVPF

Which of these issues is of biggest concern to you and your family – Childcare, Education, Health, Work

Inclusion Qualifier

Have you been employed within the last 5 years? That is, worked in a paid position in that time.

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 9 declined

If respondent not in the workforce within the last 5 years please thank and close

IF YES, was this work based inside or outside your home?

- 1 inside
- 2 outside
- 9 declined

IF INSIDE THE HOME were you working as a ..

- 1 carer
- 2 outworker
- 3 self employed
- 4 other (specify)

In the last 5-year period have you either experienced or witnessed violence in any of your workplaces?

- 1 yes
- 2 no
- 8 don't know (don't read out)
- 9 declined

Have you experienced or witnessed any of the following behaviours in any of your workplaces over the last 5 years?

READ LIST - FOR EACH BEHAVIOUR THE OPTIONS ARE

- 1 experienced
- 2 witnessed
- 3 both
- 8 don't know (don't ready out)
- 9 declined

Behaviours

- | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rude gestures | <input type="checkbox"/> Swearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Shouting | <input type="checkbox"/> Name calling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hostile behaviours | <input type="checkbox"/> Aggressive posturing | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaving offensive messages | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Innuendo | <input type="checkbox"/> Deliberate silence | <input type="checkbox"/> Ostracism | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intimidation | <input type="checkbox"/> Threats | <input type="checkbox"/> Punching | <input type="checkbox"/> Scratching |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spitting | <input type="checkbox"/> Squeezing/Pinching | <input type="checkbox"/> Kicking | <input type="checkbox"/> Throwing things |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biting | <input type="checkbox"/> Victimisation | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobbing | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stalking | <input type="checkbox"/> Bullying | <input type="checkbox"/> Racial harassment | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> Physical attacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Battering | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wounding | <input type="checkbox"/> Robbery | <input type="checkbox"/> Rape | <input type="checkbox"/> Homicide |

IF RESPONDENT HAS NEITHER WITNESSED NOR EXPERIENCED ANY OF THESE BEHAVIOURS IN THEIR WORKPLACE(S) WITHIN THE LAST 5 YEARS PLEASE GO TO DEMO FORM VERY IMPORTANT – NEED DEMOS FOR VALID SURVEY

IF respondent HAS either witnessed or experienced any of these behaviours, please continue

And (respondent's name) within that 5 year period, was that all within the one workplace or in several workplaces?

- 1 One workplace
- 2 Multiple workplaces
- 7 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

**GO TO WORKPLACE 1 SCRIPT/FORM
WORKPLACE 1 / SINGLE WORKPLACE SCRIPT**

W1_1 Were you a witness or the person experiencing these behaviours?

- 1 experienced
- 2 witnessed

3 both

W1_2 And did these behaviours happen on one occasion or multiple occasions?

- 1 One occasion
- 2 Multiple occasions
- 8 Don't know/Can't Remember
- 9 Declined

W1_3 **IF ONE OCCASION** And what happened on that occasion? **RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY** (Post code per original list)

IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

And what happened on the FIRST occasion that you can remember in that workplace? RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY (Post code per original list)

IF WITNESS

W1_4 Who was the person experiencing these behaviours?

IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

IF WITNESS who was the person experiencing these behaviours on the FIRST occasion you can remember in that workplace?
--

- 1 Another worker
- 2 Other workers
- 3 Supervisor
- 4 Manager
- 5 Owner
- 7 Other (specify)
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Declined

W1_5 Who was the person doing these behaviours?

- 1 Another worker
- 2 Other workers
- 3 Supervisor
- 4 Manager
- 5 Owner
- 7 Other (specify)
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Declined

Q1_5a Was the person doing this behaviours on this (or this first) occasion male or female?

- 1 male
- 2 female
- 3 both
- 4 both mainly male
- 5 both mainly female
- 8 dk/cr
- 9 declined

W1_6 What was the effect of these behaviours on you? RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY

W1_7 IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

How soon after that first incident would it have been until the next incident occurred?

- 1 Same day
- 2 Next day
- 3 Same week
- 4 Few weeks later
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_8 IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

And what do you remember as the second incident? RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY

W1_8a IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

Q1_8a Was the person doing this behaviours on the 2nd occasion male or female?

- 1 male
- 2 female
- 3 both
- 4 both mainly male
- 5 both mainly female
- 8 dk/cr
- 9 declined

W1_9 IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

And what do you remember as the third incident? RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY

W1_9a IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

Q1_8a Was the person doing this behaviours on the 3rd occasion male or female?

- 1 male
- 2 female
- 3 both
- 4 both mainly male
- 5 both mainly female
- 8 dk/cr
- 9 declined

W1_10 IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

How frequently did you witness or experience these types of behaviours in this workplace?

- 1 Daily
- 2 Several times per week
- 3 Weekly

- 4 Several times per month
- 5 Occasionally
- 8 Don't know
- 9 Declined

W1_11 IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

And would you say that in general the behaviours got worse over time? (eg. Got more intense or escalated?)

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know/Can't Remember
- 9 Declined

W1_12 IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

And what would you describe as the worst incident you experienced or witnessed at that workplace? RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY

W1_12a IF MULTIPLE OCCASIONS

Q1_8a And was this person male or female?

- 1 male
- 2 female
- 3 both
- 4 both mainly male
- 5 both mainly female
- 8 dk/cr
- 9 declined

W1_13 Did you take any sick leave because of these behaviours?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 7 NA (casual worker)
- 8 Don't know/can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_14 Did you lodge a WorkCover claim because of these behaviours?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know/can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_15 IF NO, what was the main reason you chose not to lodge a WorkCover claim?

W1_16 IF YES Was your WorkCover claim successful?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 3 Didn't Proceed with Claim

- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_17 Did you report these behaviours to a manager or someone else in a position of authority at this workplace?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 7 NA
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_18 IF YES What was the effect of this reporting? **RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY**

W1_19 IF NO What would you say your main reason was for not reporting? **RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY**

W1_20 Were you a Member of a Union at the time of this incident?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_21 IF YES, Did you discuss this incident with your Union?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_22 IF YES, What was the effect of these discussions?

W1_23 IF NO (i.e. was a Member but didn't raise incident) What was the reason you didn't alert your Union to this incident? **RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY**

W1_24 How much would you say these types of behaviour in this workplace affected your enjoyment of the job?

- 1 A lot
- 2 Somewhat
- 3 Not at all
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_25 What industry was this job in?

W1_26 Was this your first job?

W1_27 What age group were you in at the time of this incident?

- | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 15 – 16 | 17 – 18 | 19 – 20 | 21 – 25 | 26 – 30 | 31 – 35 |
| 36 – 40 | 41 – 45 | 46 – 50 | 51 – 55 | 55+ | |

W1_ 28 Approximately how many people were employed at this workplace?

- 1 <5
- 2 6 - 10
- 3 11 - 20
- 4 21 - 50
- 5 51 - 100
- 6 101 – 200
- 7 201 – 300
- 8 300+

W1_ 29 In this job were you a permanent, contract or casual worker?

- 1 Permanent
- 2 Contract
- 3 Casual
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

W1_ 30 Was this workplace in a metropolitan or country area?

- 1 Metro
- 2 Country

W1_ 31 Are you still working at the same workplace?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Declined

W1_ 32 How long in total did you work there/have you worked there?

ONLY IF THIS WORKPLACE IS THE LAST ONE IN THE PREVIOUS 5 YEARS

W1_33 Do you have any other comments you would like to make about violence in the workplace? **RECORD VERBATIM & PROBE FULLY**

**IF THIS WORKPLACE NOT THE LAST ONE IN THE PREVIOUS 5 YEARS
PLEASE GO TO WORKPLACE 2 FORM & TO WORKPLACE 2 SCRIPT5**

DEMOGRAPHICS SCRIPT

Now (name) just a couple of quick questions about you.

D1 Are you currently working?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Declined

D2 And what industry are you currently in?

D3 And what type of position are you currently in? PLEASE GET AS MANY DETAILS

⁵ This script is not included as it is the same as the Workplace 1 script.

AS POSSIBLE (TO BE CODED LATER)

D4 Is your current job permanent, contract or casual?

- 1 Permanent
- 2 Contract
- 3 Casual
- 8 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

D5 If respondent indicates contract, How long is your contract for?

D6 In what year were you born?

D7 Were you born in Australia?

- 1 Yes – GO TO Q D8
- 2 No - GO TO Q 10
- 9 Declined

D8 What is your cultural background?

D9 Do you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

D 10 IF NO TO Q D7- Where were you born?

D11 Is English your first language?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 9 Declined

D12 Are you currently a Union Member?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No
- 7 Don't know/Can't remember
- 9 Declined

SURVEY CLOSE SCRIPT

(Respondent's name) just one more quick thing and then we're done!

C1 Firstly, the researchers may wish to re-contact some participants to obtain additional details. Would that be ok with you?

- 1 yes
- 2 no

C2 IF YES Is this the best number to contact you on?

C3 And do you have an email address we could contact you on?

Finally, I'm required under the Privacy Act to advise you the information you've provided will be used for research purposes only. Once this project is completed your

contact details will be removed from your responses. We anticipate that will happen within the next three months. Your contact details will only be used as agreed to either re-contact you or forward information to you.

Under the Privacy Act you have the right to request the information you have provided.

C4 TICK PRIVACY STATEMENT READ

Once again, thank you very much for your time and your feedback today, we really appreciate it.

Appendix B: Telephone survey data

Table B1: Women experiencing and witnessing violence in the workplace in the last 5 years and in the last 12 months by type of behaviour

Behaviour	In the last 5 years				In the last 12 months			
	Experienced ¹		Witnessed only		Experienced ¹		Witnessed only	
	No.	% of all	No.	% of all	No.	% of all	No.	% of all
Swearing	420	43.0%	152	15.6%	157	16.4%	35	4.0%
Shouting	376	38.5%	129	13.2%	129	13.2%	42	4.3%
Hostile behaviours	376	38.5%	128	13.0%	130	13.3%	41	4.2%
Intimidation	337	34.5%	113	11.6%	107	11.0%	40	4.1%
Aggressive posturing	328	33.6%	116	11.9%	117	12.0%	32	3.3%
Deliberate silence	302	30.9%	75	7.7%	103	10.5%	20	2.0%
Name calling	262	26.8%	117	12.0%	101	10.3%	29	3.0%
Innuendo	256	26.2%	88	9.0%	83	8.5%	30	3.1%
Bullying	187	19.1%	140	14.3%	65	6.7%	51	5.2%
Ostracism	173	17.7%	98	10.0%	50	5.1%	42	4.3%
Threats	158	16.2%	85	8.7%	56	5.7%	29	3.0%
Victimisation	123	12.6%	113	11.6%	41	4.2%	47	4.8%
Throwing things	123	12.6%	90	9.2%	45	4.6%	37	3.8%
Sexual harassment	91	9.3%	67	6.9%	21	2.1%	30	3.1%
Squeezing	89	9.1%	37	3.8%	40	4.1%	16	1.6%
Biting	48	4.9%	26	2.7%	25	2.6%	11	1.1%
Spitting	64	6.6%	46	4.7%	29	3.0%	23	2.4%
Scratching	67	6.9%	39	4.0%	32	3.3%	20	2.0%
Punching	62	6.3%	67	6.9%	26	2.7%	27	2.8%
Kicking	76	7.8%	53	5.4%	37	3.8%	19	1.9%
Offensive messages	69	7.1%	40	4.1%	21	2.1%	15	1.5%
Physical attacks	68	7.0%	55	5.6%	29	3.0%	19	1.9%
Racial harassment	30	3.1%	72	7.4%	11	1.1%	28	2.9%
Robbery	50	5.1%	49	5.0%	18	1.8%	20	2.0%
Mobbing	32	3.3%	38	3.9%	11	1.1%	16	1.6%
Wounding	31	3.2%	37	3.8%	12	1.2%	13	1.3%
Stalking	25	2.6%	29	3.0%	7	0.7%	8	0.8%
Battering	18	1.8%	18	1.8%	8	0.8%	4	0.4%
Rape	2	.2%	7	.7%	0	0%	1	0.1%
Assault leading to Death	0	.0%	4	.4%	0	0%	1	0.1%
All Violence	607	62.1%	70 ²	7.2%	194	19.9%	15 ²	1.5%
All women surveyed	977	100%	977	100%	977	100%	977	100%

¹ Women who experienced violence may also have witnessed it. Women may have also experienced more than one type of violence.

² This is the total number of women who witnessed violence directed to others but did not experience it themselves.

Table B2: Industry of current employment of all survey respondents and industry in which violence occurred

	Current industry of employment- all survey respondents		Industry of employment in which violence occurred ²	
	A	B	D	E
	No.	% of total	No.	% of total
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	56	5.7%	57	8.4%
Agriculture, Mining#	14	1.4%	11	1.6%
Communication Services	11	1.1%	10	1.5%
Construction, Electricity, Gas & Water#	16	1.6%	10	1.5%
Cultural & Recreational Services	21	2.1%	11	1.6%
Education	113	11.6%	90	13.3%
Finance & Insurance	33	3.4%	23	3.4%
Government Admin & Defence	36	3.7%	27	4.0%
Health & Community Services	233	23.9%	203	30.0%
Manufacturing	46	4.7%	51	7.5%
Personal & Other Services	16	1.6%	7	1.0%
Property & Business Services	68	7.0%	58	8.6%
Retail	95	9.7%	87	12.9%
Transport & Storage, Wholesale Trade ¹	11	1.1%	14	2.0%
Not employed or not provided	199	20.4%	18	2.7%
Total	977	100.0%	677	100.0%

¹ ANZSIC (Australian New Zealand Standard Industry Classification) sectors with small numbers of survey respondents have been combined.

² Figures in columns D & E can be higher than figures in columns A & B as some women currently work in a different industry to the one in which they experienced the violence.

Table B3: Age by experience of workplace violence

Age group	Survey respondents		Women experiencing and/or witnessing workplace violence		Women neither experiencing nor witnessing workplace	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total ¹	Number	% of total ²
55 +	144	14.7%	94	13.9%	50	16.7%
45-54	265	27.1%	189	27.9%	76	25.3%
35-44	327	33.5%	228	33.7%	99	33.0%
25-34	167	17.1%	117	17.3%	50	16.7%
15-24	43	4.4%	28	4.1%	15	5.0%
Not provided	31	3.2%	21	3.1%	10	3.3%
Total	977	100.0%	677	100.0%	300	100.0%

¹ This is the percentage of the total number of women experiencing and/or witnessing workplace violence.

² This is the percentage of the total number of women neither experiencing nor witnessing workplace violence.

Table B4: Frequency of workplace violence experienced by women in the last 12 months.

Frequency of violence	Number	Percentage of the total number of women experiencing violence in the last 12 months
Occurred once only	8	4.1%
Occurred on multiple occasions	186	95.8%
Occurred daily	32	16.5%
Occurred at least weekly	76	39.2%
Occurred several times a month	50	25.8%
Occurred occasionally	28	14.4%
TOTAL	194	100.0%

Table B5: Women who experienced and/or witnessed specific types of violence in the workplace but who initially responded that they had not experienced or witnessed 'violence' in the workplace

Forms of violent behaviour experienced or witnessed by women	Women responding 'no' when initially asked if they had experienced or witnessed 'violence' in the workplace	
	Number ¹	% of all women who experienced or witnessed the particular form of behaviour
Swearing	305	53.3%
Shouting	236	46.7%
Hostile behaviours	232	46.0%
Intimidation	206	45.8%
Aggressive posturing	199	44.8%
Deliberate silence	190	50.4%
Name calling	159	42.0%
Innuendo	159	46.2%
Bullying	131	40.1%
Ostracism	125	46.1%
Threats	80	32.9%
Victimisation	90	38.1%
Throwing things	58	27.2%
Sexual harassment	63	39.9%
Squeezing	29	23.0%
Biting	14	18.9%
Spitting	23	20.9%
Scratching	23	21.7%
Punching	25	19.4%
Kicking	26	20.2%
Offensive messages	37	33.9%
Physical attacks	20	16.3%
Racial harassment	31	30.4%

Robbery	36	36.4%
Mobbing	23	32.9%
Wounding	12	17.6%
Stalking	13	24.1%
Battering	8	22.2%
Rape	0	0.0%
All types of violent behaviour	381	39%
All women surveyed	977	100%

¹ Some women will have experienced more than one type of violence.

Table B6: Perpetrators of violence in the workplace by industry and relationship to workplace (employed in workplace, other)

Industry	Employed in the workplace		Not employed in the workplace		Total ¹
	No.	% of all perpetrators in specified industry	No.	% of all perpetrators in specified industry	No.
Manufacturing	47	92.2%	2	3.9%	51
Agriculture	8	80.0%	1	10.0%	10
Property & Business Services	45	77.6%	10	17.2%	58
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	43	75.4%	14	24.6%	57
Other industries (combined)	23	71.9%	8	25.0%	32
Finance & Insurance	15	65.2%	7	30.4%	23
Retail	54	62.1%	27	31.0%	87
Health	64	48.9%	63	48.1%	131
Government	13	48.1%	13	48.1%	27
Community Services	33	45.8%	36	50.0%	72
Industry not known	8	44.4%	5	27.8%	18
Education	39	43.3%	46	51.1%	90
<i>Industries with survey sample size <= 10</i>					
Communication Services	5	50.0%	2	20.0%	10
Cultural & Recreation'l Services	3	27.3%	7	63.6%	11
Total	400	59.1%	241	35.6%	677

¹Total includes 36 incidents for which information about perpetrators was not provided.

Table B7: Perpetrators of violence in the workplace: Sex and relationship to workplace (employed in workplace or not employed in the workplace).

Perpetrator/s' relationship to workplace	Sex of perpetrator/s of violence				Total
	Male or mainly male	Female or mainly female	Both male & female	Not provided	
Employed in the workplace					
Other worker/s (number)	105	91	28	11	235
Other worker/s (%)	44.7%	38.7%	11.9%	4.7%	100.0%
Owner, manager or supervisor (number)	96	56	10	3	165
Owner, manager or supervisor (%)	58.2%	33.9%	6.1%	1.8%	100.0%

Sub-total: employed in the workplace (number)	201	147	38	14	400
Sub-total: employed in the workplace (%)	50.3%	36.8%	9.5%	3.5%	100.0%
Not employed in the workplace					
Client/s or patient/s (number)	48	21	19	6	94
Client/s or patient/s (%)	51.1%	22.3%	20.2%	6.4%	100.0%
Customers (number)	27	10	9	0	46
Customers (%)	58.7%	21.7%	19.6%	.0%	100.0%
Students (number)	23	2	9	2	36
Students (%)	63.9%	5.6%	25.0%	5.6%	100.0%
Parents/relatives (number)	9	4	3	0	16
Parents/relatives (%)	56.3%	25.0%	18.8%	.0%	100.0%
Other (number)	23	8	15	3	49
Other (%)	46.9%	16.3%	30.6%	6.1%	100.0%
Not known	7	4	2	23	36
	19.4%	11.1%	5.6%	63.9%	100.0%
<i>Sub-total: all not employed in the workplace (not incl. not known above)</i>	130	45	55	11	241
	53.9%	18.7%	22.8%	4.6%	100.0%
Total (employed in the workplace plus not employed in the workplace)					
	338	196	95	48	677
	49.9%	29.0	14.0%	7.1%	100.0%