

Domestic Violence at Home Affects Work and Workplaces!

[We were late for work, absent from work, or bothered at work!]

Key Findings of National Survey on the Impact of Domestic Violence on Workers and in Workplaces in the Philippines

Joint ITUC-AP/Philippine Affiliates' Report



Between June 2015 – September 2015, the International Trade Union Confederation-Asia Pacific in cooperation with Philippine affiliates, Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP), Federation of Free Workers (FFW) and Sentro ng mga Nagkakaisa at Progresibong Manggagawa (SENTRO), conducted a national online survey on the impact of domestic violence on workers and in workplaces. The full report will be released in November 2015.

A total of 1,084 workers completed the survey - 59% female, 40% male; other (1%). Most respondents were from National Capital Region (34%) and CALABARZON (13%); the rest were distributed across 17 regions of the country. Over 60% of respondents were aged between 18-35. Most respondents reported working in education (16%), manufacturing (14%) and retail trade sectors (11%). As most of the respondents (75%) were from unionized enterprises, most were employed in permanent (65%) and full-time (85%) positions. There were respondents from business process outsourcing (BPOs)/call centers (9%) and economic zones (7%). Some (7%) of the respondents were domestic workers.

Findings based on initial review of data indicate the following:

- One in five (21%) respondents reported experiencing various forms of domestic violence, including emotional/psychological (74%), physical (37%) and harassment (17%), mostly from their husbands (46%), wives (13%), partners (21%), boyfriends (11%) or girlfriends (6%).
- An additional 20% of respondents knew someone at work who had experienced domestic violence.
- Nearly 84% of those who had experienced domestic violence reported that the violence affected their attendance at work (being late, missing work, or both). The major reasons - transportation money or vehicle keys were stolen or withheld.
- One in two (54%) of those who experienced domestic violence, reported that the violence continued at or near the workplace in the form of abusive phone calls or text messages (33%) or stalking or harassment outside the workplace (16%).
- Some 75% reported that DV affected their work performance as they were unwell (45%), distracted (41%), injured (23%) and tired (18%) from the DV.
- 62% of the respondents who reported knowing someone at work who had experienced domestic violence said that their co-workers' ability to work were similarly affected, due to being distracted (66%), unwell (43%), tired (31%), or injured (27%) from the domestic violence.

"I was hospitalized in critical condition. I reported the abuse to my husband's employer. He was terminated."

*"Marami akong absent, dahil sa DV. Inde daw tamang excuse, sabi ng supervisor."
["I have many absences. My supervisor says it's not an acceptable excuse."]*

- Domestic violence also affected the well-being of other employees. Over 55% of respondents said that co-workers were stressed or concerned about the abusive situation (34%), their work load increased, their schedules were changed (15%), or caused conflict and tension with co-workers (14%).
- One in three respondents (34%) who had experienced domestic violence reported that their abuser was employed in the same workplace.
- 74% of respondents who reported knowing someone at work who had experienced DV reported that their co-worker's DV experience affected them [respondents], too – they were stressed or concerned about the abusive situation (45%), DV caused conflict and tension between them (19%), and their work was affected, e.g., increased workload (15%).
- One in two (53%) of those who had experienced DV discussed the violence with somebody at work; with co-workers (88%), managers/supervisors (51%), union (38%), or human resources (35%). "Privacy" (40%), "fear of being judged" (22%), or "felt embarrassed or ashamed" (18%) were major reasons for not disclosing their experience with anyone at work.
- Worse, one in ten (10%) of domestic violence victims indicated they had lost their job as a result of DV, while one in five (21%) experienced discrimination from the employer as a result of discussing their DV experience.
- Of the domestic workers (kasambahay) respondents, 30% had personally experienced various forms of abuse either from current or former employers or member of their household, often in the form of psychological or emotional abuse (e.g., calling names), sexual and physical abuse, harassment and coercion. Some respondents have been abused both at home (by family) and by their employers.
- Almost one-fourth (23%) of those who experienced DV applied for paid leave or just went absent without leave because they needed to deal with health/medical issues related to the domestic violence (26%); attend appointments related to the domestic violence, e.g., barangay, police (22%); attend counselling related to the domestic violence (21%); or attend criminal or family court hearings.
- Respondents' awareness of legally mandated paid domestic violence leave is low at 39%. 45% said they had received information about DV from government, from the union (30%).
- The vast majority of respondents (92%), whether they had personally experienced DV or not, believed that DV impacts the work lives of those experiencing abuse.
- Yet, respondents also thought that employers (39%) or unions (17%) are not aware when DV is affecting workers. One in four (26%) of respondents said that employers do not act in a positive way when workers report their DV experience. The rate for unions was better at one in 7 (15%).
- Among all respondents, 92% think that workplace support such as paid leave, education, training, and safety policies for domestic violence could reduce the effects of violence on the work lives of workers.

"Natahi ko ang finger ko sa kaiisip."

[I accidentally sewed my finger; I was distracted.]

"Ayokong magsabi sa kumpanya. Ka-lalake kong tao. Kahiya."

[It's embarrassing to tell [the employer.] I'm male.]

"Nag-file ako ng leave, di tinanggap. Nag-absent without leave na lang."

[I filed for leave, which was refused. I just went AWOL.]

"My supervisor told me, your personal problem is separate from your work, we don't have anything to do with your personal issues, learn to separate the two."

"Managers and supervisors are aware when DV is affecting employees but they don't act unless in extreme cases like physical injuries."

"The Regional Director of the place where I sought reassignment did not accommodate my request to be assigned in the place where I was living with my kids and parents. Because of this, I was forced to live with my [abusive] husband again for years."

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