

The JDCS model and blue-collar bullying: Decent working conditions for a healthy environment

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Violence in the workplace and its health consequences still represent one of the main obstacles to obtaining decent working conditions. In particular, blue-collar workers run a greater risk of experiencing episodes of violence, also because of a lack of autonomy and fewer social interactions. According to the work environment hypothesis, factors such as high workload, lack of social support and lack of job control represent the antecedents of workplace bullying. Following the job demand-control-support model (JDCS), violence can be the symptom of a high-strain environment. Moreover, it is still unclear if workplace bullying can mediate the effects of work-related stress on workers' health outcomes. The aim of the present study is to analyse the relationship between the components of the JDCS and the health of the workers considering workplace bullying as a mediating variable. By a cross sectional study design, we tested the following theoretical hypotheses: first, JDCS components (conceptualized as stress) are supposed to significantly predict the level of workers' health. Second, workplace bullying is supposed to mediate the relationship between the JDCS components and the level of health. The sample consists of 400 blue-collar workers from three different Italian companies. Work-related stress, health outcomes and workplace bullying were measured by specific self-administered questionnaires and the relationships between the variables of interest were tested through a structural equation model (SEM) analysis. The results showed that while the direct relationship between the components of the JDCS and the level of psychological health is weaker (standardized path coefficients $SPC = 0.21$), the partial mediation

hypothesis shows that workplace bullying mediate the relationship between JDCS components and health outcomes ($F(2/df) = 2.70$; path from stress to workplace bullying $SPC = 0.78$; path from workplace bullying to general health $SPC = 0.51$; $p = 0.01$). The JDCS components (workload, lack of control, lack of support) are useful predictors for workplace bullying. On the other hand, bullying plays a mediating role between the stress experienced and the health consequences. The present study adds new insights into the relationship between violence seen as a form of social behavioural strain and the psychological health of workers. The theoretical and practical implications are discussed. Future research on blue-collar workers could use longitudinal designs in order to analyse the relationship between social environment, job design and strain reactions. © 2019 by the authors.

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