

SECTORAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAMME

Working Paper

Violence at work in hotels, catering and tourism

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Working papers are preliminary documents circulated
to stimulate discussion and obtain comments

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Sectoral activities in the ILO

The Sectoral Activities Department is part of the Social Dialogue Sector of the ILO. Its objective is to promote social dialogue at the sectoral level and to facilitate the exchange of information among the ILO's constituents on labour and social developments concerning particular economic sectors. One of its means of action is practically oriented research on topical sectoral issues. This publication is an outcome of that research.

The particular characteristics of the various primary, manufacturing and service sectors account for the different form taken in them by issues such as globalization, flexible work organization, industrial relations, the implications of structural and technological change, trends in the number and nature of jobs, and the situation of special groups such as children and women workers. The Sectoral Activities Department is the ILO's interface with its constituents at the sectoral level.

Continuing attention is given to 22 industries or sectors dealing with:

- **Industrial activities** (extractive, rural, manufacturing, construction);
- **Maritime industries and transport** (shipping, fishing, ports, inland water; rail, road and air transport);
- **Services** (commerce; financial and professional services; media, culture, graphical industries; post and telecommunications; education; health; public services; utilities; hotels, catering and tourism).

These sectors are vital in virtually all national economies. Issues concerning other sectors or sub-sectors are addressed on an ad hoc basis.

Among the principal activities of the Sectoral Activities Department is the holding of international sectoral meetings that provide a forum for discussion and an exchange of views on current issues in the sector concerned. Sectoral meetings are generally tripartite, with equal participation by governments, employers and workers. Where the government is the predominant employer, however, participation reflects this. From time to time, meetings also take the form of seminars or specialized meetings of experts. An outcome of most meetings is agreed conclusions that serve as guidelines for policies and measures for dealing with the issues and problems – at the national level and by the ILO.

The Department undertakes follow-up activities to these meetings and provides various forms of technical assistance, including the promotion of tripartite sectoral dialogue on priority labour issues at national level, and the provision of advisory services on sectoral labour issues. It also collects, analyses and disseminates technical sectoral information and carries out studies, such as this one, on issues of concern to particular sectors or groups of sectors.

Preface

The ILO's Sectoral Activities Department commissioned this Working Paper in preparation for a Meeting of experts, to be held from 8 to 15 October 2003 in Geneva, which is intended to consider and review a draft and to adopt a Code of practice on *Violence and stress at work in services sectors: A threat to productivity and decent work*. That Meeting is part of the continuing work of the Department on 22 sectors of economic activity, of which the hotel, catering and tourism sector is one. Sectoral working papers have been prepared on a number of other sectors and subsectors, in relation to violence and stress. These include the following papers: Bert Essenberg: *Violence and stress in the transport sector* (Geneva, ILO, 2003); Helge Hoel and Ståle Einarsen: *Violence and stress at work in the financial services* (Geneva, ILO, 2003); Sabir Giga, Helge Hoel and Cary L. Cooper: *Violence and stress at work in the postal sector* (Geneva, ILO 2003); Richard Verdugo and Anamaria Vere: *Workplace violence in services sectors with implications for the education sector: Issues, solutions and resources*; Sabir Giga, Helge Hoel and Cary L. Cooper: *Violence and stress at work in the performing arts and in journalism* and other papers that have been published, are as follows: V. Di Martino: *Workplace violence in the health sector – Country case studies: Brazil, Bulgaria, Lebanon, Portugal, South Africa, Thailand, plus additional Australian study: Synthesis Report* (Geneva, ILO/ICN/WHO/PSI Joint Programme, 2002); V. Di Martino: *Relationship of work stress and workplace violence in the health sector* (Geneva, ILO/ICN/WHO/PSI Joint Programme on Workplace Violence in the Health Sector working paper, 2003); J. Richards: *Management of workplace violence victims* (Geneva, ILO/ICN/WHO/PSI Joint Programme working paper, 2003); and ILO/ICN/WHO/PSI: *Framework guidelines for addressing workplace violence in the health sector* (Geneva, 2002).

It is hoped that this study will help to promote action to tackle violence and stress in workplaces in hotel and catering services, and complement work being carried out by the ILO and other organizations at various levels to assist in reducing or eliminating stress and violence at workplaces in services sectors around the world.

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1. Introduction

Violence and stress at the workplace are complex phenomena. Their negative impact ranges from psychological, rather subjective, harm or injury to physical injury, breakdown or disease. Violence includes not only physical acts committed in a limited number of single situations but also long term behaviour like harassment, whose impact on the victim can be even worse than that of immediate physical injury. Moreover, stress is difficult to delimit if harmful stress is to be distinguished from its useful dimensions. There certainly is a causal relationship between stress and violence which is reciprocal, although either can also exist without the other: violence and the – implicit or explicit – threat of violence do create undue stress, but can also be the result of stress; on the other hand, violent acts committed by outsiders can hardly be attributed to stress directly, although their likeliness to occur does create stress. As both violence and stress are often present in the same work environment, this paper deals with them as related phenomena.

Violence and stress at work are more present in service sectors than in other economic sectors, because they originate to a large extent from the interface between workers and customers. Violence and stress in this relationship can be felt either directly, when a customer acts unreasonably, or indirectly, through unexpected situations which are difficult to control and may provoke inappropriate reactions. Like other service sectors, the hotel, catering and tourism sector is characterised by an interface with the public/customer. Account is to be taken of the fact that the hotels and catering enterprises provide employment to large numbers of workers some of whom have little training and come from vulnerable groups of the population such as young people, women with family responsibilities, and migrants or members of ethnic minorities. These workers are in particular need of support to prevent, and cope with, situations potentially generating violence and stress.

This paper is a review of the relevant literature that is available at present. While studies on violence and stress at work in general are still in a pioneer stage, even less literature can be found on the hotel, catering and tourism sector. Most of the relevant studies are based on empirical evidence with limited scope. The concepts accordingly are little comparable between the studies and do not allow to quantitatively relate the phenomena they describe. More research is therefore needed to sharpen the concepts as well as to increase the volume of empirical knowledge. Consequently, the general picture that can be obtained from the many partial insights presented in this paper is hoped to stimulate the debate on the issues raised.

The literature reviewed is certainly biased geographically and perhaps culturally, as most of the studies referenced have been undertaken in Europe, the United States or Australia. However, there appears to be sufficient evidence from newly-industrialized countries and territories (e.g. South Korea and Hong Kong, China) and developing countries (India and Pakistan) to suggest that the problems discussed are probably independent of location and certainly not limited to the countries overwhelmingly represented in the studies and reports available.

2. Definitions

Stress is a complex phenomenon, as reflected by the large number of definitions in circulation (Di Martino, 1992). However, in recent years, definitions have tended to converge around one that starts from an explanation of stress as an interactive psychological process or a subjective state involving the individual as well as the situation (Di Martino, 1992; Cox, 1993). According to this approach, stress is seen as a perceived imbalance between (internal and external) demands (stressors) facing the individual and

the perceived ability to cope with the situation. Such a definition is presented by McGrath (1976), who describes stress as being present when an environmental demand is of such a magnitude that it may threaten to exceed a person's capabilities or resources for meeting it, and especially so under conditions where coping is paramount or even vital. The situation will be influenced by the nature and the extent of the demands, the character of the individual, the social support available, and the constraints under which the coping process is taking place (Cox, Griffith and Rial-Gonzalez, (2000).

One source of stress is the phenomenon of violence at the workplace either as experienced violent acts or as a potential of imminent violence associated with the work situation. It has received considerable attention recently in the media and in literature on management. In turn, the dynamics of stress suggest that violence may be a result of stress.

Workplace violence is defined by the European Commission as 'incidents where persons are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well-being or health' (Wynne, Clarkin, Cox and Griffiths, 1997). This definition does not distinguish between co-workers, customers or complete strangers as the persons responsible for a violent act.

It is important to emphasize that violence can be of a physical as well as a psychological nature. The latter would include phenomena such as bullying and mobbing, as well as harassment on the basis of gender, race and sexuality.

Bullying at work has been defined as repeated and systematic negative behaviour that for a long period of time is directed at an employee by co-workers or superiors/managers in a situation where the victim finds it difficult to either defend him/herself or to escape the situation or its consequences, and which results in psychological harm (Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and Cooper, 2003). Furthermore, bullying has been seen as both a cause and a consequence of stress at work.

The interrelated issues of violence and stress in the workplace have attained greater prominence over the last few years, partly as the result of an ever-increasing effort on the part of key international bodies such as the ILO to advance our understanding of the main causes and effects. Thus, recently published guidelines for the prevention of violence and harassment in the health sector emphasize the importance of addressing organizational issues such as work practices, work design and staffing levels, as they may impact on stress levels and, therefore, on levels of aggression and violence (ILO/ICN/WHO/PSI, 2002).

This review of the literature focuses on the experience of stress and violence and their interactions within the hotel, catering and tourism industry. While the main emphasis is on academic studies and research findings, the review also draws upon published surveys, reports and opinions by industry professionals, as well as documents and publications from employer and union organizations within the sector.

3. Working conditions that may be conducive to violence and stress at work

The hotel, catering and tourism industry embraces a large number of different organizations and workplaces including hotels, motels and campsites, restaurants, bars, clubs and cafeterias, catering and canteen establishments, travel agencies and tourism information offices, as well as conference and exhibition centres (ILO, 2001). A number of factors are mentioned below which, either alone or in combination, directly or indirectly, may contribute to stress and violence, and which are more or less characteristic of the sector. They are, however, neither exclusive to the sector nor should they be seen as

predominant in the sector, as the information available on working conditions in the hotel, catering and tourism sector remains largely anecdotal. The same is true for information on violence and stress in this industry.

Long shifts, irregular and unusual working hours

A characteristic potential stress factor for many workers in the hospitality industry originates from changing timetables and work during unsocial hours including evenings and nights. Shift-work is widespread and, especially in restaurants, may include split shifts. Work on Sundays (a normal rest day in many countries) is common. While a large proportion of employees work shorter hours due to their part-time status, overtime is also common, with a higher than average number of people working more than 65 hours per week (Smith and Carroll, in press).

Income insecurity

Wages paid to employees in the hospitality industry on a regular basis are lower on the average than those in comparable occupations in other sectors. For example, in the UK, male workers earn approximately 45% of the national industry average for males. For women, the percentage is somewhat higher, although in overall terms it is lower than that of their male counterparts (Smith and Carroll, in press). Depending on the culture of a country and on other factors, a considerable portion of the total income of hospitality employees may originate from tips. However, only employees with direct contact to customers may benefit from tips except where re-distribution modalities are in place. If tips are important, the worker may have to cope with income insecurity and with a resulting irregular life style. As a result, many of the lowest paid workers, e.g. chambermaids, porters and dishwashers, may hold other jobs in addition to their substantive employment (Hoel, 1993) and face higher-than-usual work pressure.

Weak industrial relations institutions

The proportion of the workforce affiliated to trade unions in this sector varies considerably between countries but is far lower than the general average of all industries (Smith and Carroll, in press). A related problem used to be the low level of acceptance by employers of trade unions as interlocutors (Lucas, 1995). Many employers are also not supportive of employees' affiliation to trade unions, while it is common among the workers to accept the employer as a social leader, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises, or behave as individualists (e.g. Smith and Carroll, in press). Tension and conflicts at the work place therefore meet with little potential for solutions from established social dialogue (e.g. Isusi, in press; HERE, 2002a).

Informal economy

A substantial number of organizations in this sector and individuals within organizations are operating in the informal economy and therefore do not pay tax or contribute to social security/insurance schemes. The informal economy in the hotel, catering and tourism sector tends to attract workers from the most vulnerable groups of the population, e.g. single mothers in Austria (Vogt, 2003) or illegal immigrants in Portugal (Portuguese Labour Inspectorate, 2002). Employees working in such situations are especially prone to abuse of all kinds. According to a Danish report (European Foundation, in press), the informal economy is also associated with a large number of bankruptcies, which further increases the job-insecurity of employees.

Globalization, growing competition, cost-cutting and new technology

Increasingly, parts of the sector are joining the globalized economy, which is based on increased mobility of capital as well as customers. Increasing competition leads to greater pressures on workers and employers in the industry. Downsizing and redundancies are therefore not uncommon (e.g. Dølvik, 1995), leaving remaining staff with added workloads and multiple pressures.

A key element in the expansion of the sector is the introduction of new technology, in particular for information and communication. With its application, it has become possible to integrate a range of services in an organization, e.g. front office with back-office and food and beverage systems with housekeeping. The use of new technologies permits to fill unused gaps in the working time of employees and exposes them to additional skill requirements. New opportunities for job enrichment are created. At the same time, linking up with external service providers by electronic means allows for more tasks to be sub-contracted which may increase a feeling of insecurity amongst the workers concerned (ILO, 2001).

Interface between workers and customers

There has been a stream of initiatives and campaigns concerning employee behaviour and attitudes towards customers at least for at least two decades, aiming at building competitive advantage in the market (Lucas, 1995). Recent technology has made it possible, however, to further personalize customer services through system analysis of customer information (ILO, 1997). Personalized service has therefore been increasingly emphasized throughout the sector to respond to the different needs of each client.

A high proportion of employees in the industry work in a constant interface with clients, whether as service-providers or simply by occupying the same space, e.g. chambermaids and cleaning staff. This may represent a source of pressure on them, especially for those who hold jobs with low social status and without having been trained in how to communicate appropriately. They are little prepared, therefore, to face situations of violence and harassment.

Catering for nightlife customers

Parts of the hotel and catering industry are operating in the 'night-economy,' i.e., after dark. They are therefore centred on alcohol consumption and often targeted at young clients. These features potentially expose them to violence and related intimidation (Hobbs et al., 2002). Part of the industry also provides environments made to support erotic or sexual feelings with a resulting high index of exposure of its employees to threatening behaviour by customers. In hotels especially, the prevailing environment is intended to make customers feel in a private mood in spite of the commercial and public character of the place. The ambiguity between private and public norms and behaviours may also contribute to a higher risk of unacceptable behaviour not only in hotels, but also in bars and certain restaurants. More research on the phenomenon is needed before drawing firm conclusions in this relationship.

4. Vulnerable groups of workers

Women

In most countries the majority of workers in the industry are women. In Austria, for example, women account for 65% of the sector's labour force while the comparable figure for the United Kingdom is approximately 60% (Vogt, in press). The gender imbalance is especially prevalent among the youngest workers, with young women dominating this segment.

Part-time workers

The proportion of employees in the industry working part-time is much higher than in the rest of the economy. For example, in the United Kingdom, the proportion is 52% compared to 26% for the economy as a whole, while in Denmark the figure is three times the national average (European Foundation, in press).

Young workers and transient labour market

The hospitality and tourism sector employs a large number of younger workers who often are connected to the industry only temporarily. For example, in Austria, 40% of the workforce is below 25 years of age. In many countries, the industry represents an important labour market for students, who would not look for full-time employment with career prospects. The transient status of the employment is also reflected in the far higher than average figure for workforce turnover, which reaches annual ratios of 50% or above (Vogt, in press).

A related feature is the low status of many jobs in the industry (Argrusa et al, 2002), which therefore attracts workers with a low average educational profile. These conditions, especially a combination of low status, low educational level, and low age of workers are highly related to their vulnerability and susceptibility to many stressors, including sexual harassment, demanding customers, or unclear responsibilities. They also mean that the employee concerned is little able to cope with stress phenomena and violence on his or her own.

Immigrants and ethnic minorities

The number of immigrant workers in the industry is unknown, as many migrants remain unregistered. However, the fact that ethnic minority workers account for no less than 25% of members of the Danish Hotel and Catering Workers Union (RBF) is illustrative of the strong and probably growing presence of ethnic minorities among the workers of the sector. In many instances a worker's ethnic origin is a pretext for discriminatory attitudes at the work place. The workers concerned are therefore exposed to similar risks as the vulnerable groups of workers mentioned above, and similarly lack the capacity to face situations of stress, violence and harassment due to unfamiliarity with the language and other local conditions (Hoel, 1993).

5. Occurrence of violence and stress

Only a few studies in hotels, catering or tourism services have focused specifically on stress and violence. This is especially surprising in view of certain characteristics of the

working environment in the sector, especially its interface with the public. The information available is largely a side product of studies focusing on particular groups of employees or managers in particular settings or taken from larger, e.g. national, studies of stress and violence, in so far as the sectoral composition of the data.

A number of indicators suggest that physical violence is a problem in the sector. In particular, violence or the threat of violence seems to be quite a common experience of those who work in the 'night-economy' (Leather, Lawrence, Beale and Cox, 1998). Furthermore, in a report by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, the hotel and catering industry was noted as one of the sectors most prone to a risk of physical violence in the EU and the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) countries (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2000).

In a United Kingdom study of graduates in the hospitality industry (N=68), a total of 44% of respondents claimed that they had experienced violence in their careers, in managerial as well as non-managerial capacities (Scott, 1998). The average length of service of respondents was 7.4 years. It is worth noting here that several respondents mentioned the use of weapons. A total of 50% of the respondents in Scott's study suggested that their gender was the most important contributory factor to why they had been targeted. Age was also an important factor, with younger people far more vulnerable than more mature ones and with the majority of cases having been experienced by respondents when they were in their twenties. A lack of the maturity required to cope with managerial tasks is sometimes offered as a possible explanation for the increased vulnerability of younger workers. Threats to managerial staff accounted for 26% of incidents, followed by physical assault and damage to property. In more than half the cases directed at people in management positions, customers were the assailants. In-house staff was only reported as the second most frequent offender group. Here, the threat of violence was the most common offence, followed by physical damage to property and then theft. Managerial colleagues were reported to be the offenders specifically in some cases of physical abuse as well as sexual abuse and bullying. However, sexual abuse was more generally reported to have been carried out by an employee rather than by someone in a managerial position. Overall, respondents in non-managerial occupations reported customers as the most likely perpetrators.

According to the United States National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH, 1993), restaurants were the second most dangerous places to work, based on the number of people killed at work, whereas according to the United States Department of Labor (Toscano and Weber, 1995) restaurants were only the fifth most dangerous location measured in terms of risk of workplace homicide. Jenkins (1996) indicates that bartenders or other bar staff are particularly exposed with three-times greater the risk of being victims of homicide than the national average.

The vulnerability of bar and waiting staff is further highlighted in a report on psychosocial working conditions from Finland. Of all occupational groups measured, waiters were exposed to the highest risk of violence at work in 1990 and the second highest in 1997 (after social workers) (Vahtera and Pentti, 1999). In both years surveyed, more than 75% of waiters reported having experienced violence from time to time. In another recent report from the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health (Isotalus and Saarela, 1999), being a hotel receptionist was considered one of the most dangerous occupations with respect to violence, for men as well as women. For men, being a waiter was also a high-risk occupation.

A United Kingdom study of 242 licence-holders of public houses ("pubs") evaluated experiences of violence (Leather, Lawrence, Beale and Cox, 1998). While 55% of the sample had experienced shouting and abusive language on a monthly or more frequent basis, 26% had experienced pushing and shoving over the same period. A total of 15% reported fights without weapons, while weapons were used in less than 2% of the establishments. Fights of either type occurred on at least a monthly basis in the establishments concerned. Violence of any type was a more regular occurrence, with 38%

reporting abusive language and shouting on a weekly basis and 17% on a daily basis. When a longer time frame was considered, 30% had experienced fighting without the use of weapons within the last year, while a further 22% (53 licensees) had experienced fights with weapons during the time they had been managing the establishment.

In an interview study of United Kingdom chefs with experience in up-market restaurants, it was revealed that both physical violence and psychological abuse were widespread in kitchens (Johns and Menzel, 1999). Accounts of physical violence included kicking, pushing, throwing objects and deliberately burning someone with hot equipment or food. The study also emphasizes that there are links between stress and violence. Certain characteristics of this working environment such as heat and pressure to perform are seen to contribute to high levels of frustration among senior chefs.

Stress

Some reports suggest that much of the work in the hotel, catering and tourism industry is stressful, and workers in the sector are reported to feel tired and physically exhausted (Olsen, 1991). According to a recent Spanish report, stress levels in the hotel and restaurant sector are higher than the national average (Isusi, in press). Similarly, in Austria, 60% reported working under time pressure, while 56% had an unbalanced workload (Vogt, in press).

In a study of employees in the Australian hospitality industry, Ross (1995) found that a feeling of tenseness, one of the core indicators of stress used in the study, was widespread among this group of employees. In another Australian study of stress among front-office and housekeeping staff, more than half of the respondents reported that factors such as too much work, being undervalued, inadequate feedback and lack of consultation all represented sources of stress to them. In a United States study of working conditions of hotel cleaning staff (mainly chambermaids), it was reported that their workload had increased in recent years and that for example an unrealistic time for cleaning a room was often set by employers (Lee and Krause, 2002).

Indicators of 'burnout' and job alienation have been found in some countries, e.g. in the United States where there are common among middle managers of hotels. As many as 40% scored high on the Emotional Exhaustion scale and 28% on the Depersonalisation scale, both scales commonly used as measures of burnout. Anecdotal evidence exists that high levels of pressure, combined with brutal or aggressive management styles, appear to have a major influence on a large number of United Kingdom chefs' decision to give up their jobs (Leith, P., 2002). A questionnaire-based study conducted among 50 middle managers of Taj Hotels in India (Ahmad and Khanna, 1992), showed that job stress was highly correlated with low job satisfaction. Furthermore, a negative correlation was found between job stress and job involvement. Managers with high levels of job stress reported being less involved in their job and being alienated from their work.

Cruise liners and airlines are not exempt from significant work-related pressures. Typical factors of stress for those working below decks in the cruise-line industry are cramped and noisy conditions, excessively long working hours (commonly 14-16 hours per shift), inadequate staffing levels and authoritarian management styles (The Observer, 8 September, 2002, p.14). A number of employees of LSG Sky Chefs companies, which employs 36,000 workers worldwide, demonstrated outside the company's Dallas (USA) headquarters against, among other things, stress resulting from increasing work-pace and low morale (HERE, 2002b).

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment, including unwanted attention or intimidation of a sexual character, appears to be experienced widely in the hotel, catering and tourism industry. In a report by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2000), the hotel and restaurant sector was the one most frequently noted in EU and EFTA countries as having a high degree of sexual harassment. In a study undertaken in Luxemburg among 502 working women aged 16-50 years, the hotel and catering industry was reported to be the sector most affected (European Commission, 1998). In Denmark, 6% of workers in the sector reported experiences of sexual harassment compared to a national average of 2% (European Foundation, in press). In a United Kingdom study of bullying and harassment, 24.2% of respondents reported having experienced unwanted sexual attention at work, by far the highest figure for all sectors taking part in the study (Hoel, 2002). In a Norwegian survey among female members of six trade unions, 18% reported unwanted sexual attention, which was the second highest number of those sectors which were studied (Einarsen, Raknes and Matthiesen, 1993). Exposure to unwanted sexual attention in the whole survey was especially high among young women working in male-dominated organizations.

Harassment may affect men as well as women. A Finnish study of all occupations in the economy found that waiters were the occupational group most prone to sexual harassment, with almost half of all respondents reporting such experiences. Among the most common acts of harassment were obscene language and jokes, and sexually suggestive comments (European Commission, 1998). Likewise, waitresses were found to be most at risk of sexual harassment in the Netherlands (European Commission, 1998).

A survey of 274 students on a hospitality and catering course in a British higher education institution showed that 57% had experienced some kind of unwanted sexual attention during periods of supervised work experience (Worsfold and McCann, 2000). Most experiences involved verbal harassment such as suggestive remarks and abuse, followed by suggestive looks. The majority of the cases (88%) involved a female student being harassed by a male. The perpetrators included colleagues, managers and customers.

Experiences of sexual harassment are also reported from the United States and from Asian countries, though to substantially varying degree. In a comparative study of employees in restaurants in New Orleans (USA) and Hong Kong, China 25.3% of employees responded in the latter positively to the question: "Have you ever felt that a customer, a manager or a co-worker was sexually harassing you?" The corresponding figure from the United States employees was 74.7% (Argusa et al., 2002).

Looking at particularly severe cases, working in isolation is a particularly aggravating factor. A United States study of sexual assaults (rape) on women in Washington state found that of 63 claims by assaulted workers which were verified in the 1980s, six involved food workers, of whom five worked in fast-food establishments, and six involved bar-tenders, five of whom worked in taverns. A total of 85% of the women were working alone at the time of the incident and 86% of assailants were strangers (Alexander, Franklin and Wolf, 1994).

Harassment has led to remedial legal action in some countries. In a recent landmark case, the trade union at the Korean Lotte Hotel Seoul won compensation for 40 female staff members. The court ruled that the company president and seven company executives had failed to adequately protect the employees from sexual harassment (IUF, 2002b).

Bullying and victimization

Among the few studies that have so far focused on bullying in the hospitality industry, the report from the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work mentioned earlier registered the hotel and catering industry as a high-risk sector also with respect to bullying and victimization in EU and EFTA countries (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2000). This matches with a EU-wide survey of working conditions by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions. This study, based on interviews with more than 20,000 employees of all sectors, found that 12% of those working in the hotel and catering industry reported having been intimidated at work, the second highest figure of all the sectors surveyed.

National surveys in European countries show conflictive trends. In a Norwegian study (Einarsen and Skogstad, 1996), the sector was found to have one of the highest occurrences of bullying. In this study, 14.1% of respondents reported having been bullied within the last six months, and 2.9% of the reported incidents occurred weekly or on a more frequent basis. In comparison, the national average was 8.6% and 1.2% respectively. In a United Kingdom national survey of workplace bullying, involving employees from 10 hotels (n=163), however, only 7.5% reported having been bullied within the last 6 months and 16.8% within the last 5 years (Hoel and Cooper, 2002). These figures were lower than the national average of 10.6% and 24.7% respectively. Nearly one in two (46.3%) had witnessed bullying within the last 5 years, in line with the national level of 45.5%. A total of 16.7% of hotel staff had been bullied in their career by a client or a customer, as opposed to 7.8% for the sample as whole, suggesting that customers as perpetrators are a serious problem in the sector.

A recent Spanish survey on bullying of employees in the tourism sector (N=1107) concluded that 16% had been exposed to psychological violence, measured here as exposure to at least one negative behaviour associated with psychological violence during the last six months on a weekly or more frequent basis (Piñuel y Zabala, 2002). Among the respondents, 45% had witnessed bullying taking place. According to the victims, the perpetrators were primarily bosses or managers (82%), while colleagues accounted for 16% of the incidents. In 47% of the cases, the violence had lasted more than one year, and in 30% of the cases, two years or more. Looking at the particular behaviour involved, the most commonly reported acts suffered were 'giving meaningless work', 'giving work below one's professional competencies', 'putting under undue pressure' and 'systematically devaluing the effort of the person' (author's translation from the original Spanish).

6. Economic impact of violence and stress

There appears to be a growing awareness of the economic impact of stress and violence at work on individuals, organizations and the society as a whole (e.g. Hoel, Sparks, and Cooper, 2001; Sheehan, McCarthy and Henderson, 2001). At an organizational level, a number of negative outcomes have been found to be associated with employees' exposure to stress, bullying and violence at work such as higher levels of sickness; absenteeism; increased turnover, reduced productivity; poor industrial relations; a growing number of complaints and grievances; litigation; and damaged public relations (e.g. Hoel, Einarsen and Cooper, 2003).

The costs involved may be substantial. The Marriott Corporation for example, reported that a 1% increase in employee turnover would cost the company between 5 and 15 million United States Dollars (Pizam and Thornburg, 2000). On a national level for all sectors, the costs of bullying have been estimated to be close to £2 billion annually in the United Kingdom (Hoel et al., 2001), and from US\$ 0.6 to \$3.6 million per 1,000

employees in Australia (see Hoel, Einarsen and Cooper, 2003 for an overview). Based on data from the United Kingdom, Hoel et al., (2001) estimated that the overall level of stress and violence in the economy could account for between 0.5% and 3.5% of GDP. Similar data are not available for the hotel, catering and tourism sector specifically. However, the evidence from the settings suggests that similar or more significant, ratios could be expected for the sector. but this needs to be confirmed by further research.

As far as the individual is concerned, the literature on exposure to stress documents a wide range of emotional, mental, psychosomatic, behavioural and ultimately physical effects (Bunk et al., 1998). Threatening or ambiguous situations seem to lead to feelings of anxiety, while frustrating situations lead to anger, irritation and resentment. Feelings of shame and embarrassment follow from situations in which moral imperatives and personal dignity are violated or from a lack of personal accomplishment. High levels of depression, resentment, anxiety and feelings of shame follow from exposure to bullying and sexual harassment (Einarsen and Mikkelsen, 2003). Mental effects include irritability, memory problems, concentration difficulties and low morale. Typical behavioural effects include excessive drinking, smoking and other substance abuse. While common psychosomatic complaints are dizziness, fatigue, headaches and lower back pain, it has been documented that physical illnesses resulting from stress may include stomach problems, cardiovascular diseases and high blood pressure (see Bunk et al., 1998). Most of the above have been documented as being associated with exposure to violence, bullying and sexual harassment particularly at the workplace (e.g. Einarsen and Mikkelsen, 2003; Dansky and Kilpatrick, 1997).

As this review of the scientific literature and the press found little systematic work on the effects of stress and violence specifically in the hotel, catering and tourism industry, the general health status of workers in the industry may be looked at. It should be noted, however, that nothing particular seems to be known on the causes of the health problems mentioned below and that they should not be related to any documented occurrence of violence and stress, which is not reported.

Several longitudinal studies in Scandinavian countries show that the general health status of workers in the hotel and catering industry seems to be worse than that of the average population (e.g. for the 1970's, Borgan and Kristoffersen, 1986). In a later Danish study, an indicator for the general morbidity of employees was given as the number of days of hospitalisation for certain diseases (Hannerz, Tüchsen and Kristensen, 2002).¹ It revealed that workers of the hotel and restaurant sector had higher than average hospitalisation ratios than the average population for diseases across the board. For women, they also included injuries. Occupational factors are likely to play a role, although other factors related to the personality, the life style, the social status, and others may have a bearing to the extent that they are specific for the type of worker employed in hotels and restaurants. One of the potential stressors highlighted in a similar study by Tüchsen et al. (1996), is that a high number of people in the industry work what the authors refer to as "abnormal" hours (nights and weekends), which is likely to have a negative impact on the natural body rhythm.

¹ This was possible due to the availability of near complete data on hospitalization (disease information), covering 99% of admissions to Danish hospitals and updated on a yearly basis, with data on occupational status (most important occupation registered) from four national cohort-studies undertaken between 1981 and 1994, and based on national census data. Due to the availability of personal PIN numbers (national registration number) it was possible to link occupation and hospitalisation records and thus statistically measure rates for a number of diseases.

The researchers emphasize that their findings may be an underestimate of the real situation because of high turnover in the sector and because of its under-representation in the health system due to informal employment relations and high numbers of immigrants excluded from the health care system.

In an exploratory and pioneering study in the United States, Lee and Krause (2001) reported that the health status of housekeeping workers was worse than the average for the American population. Similarly, a Canadian study (N=10,500) found that the risk of mental health problems was significantly higher in the restaurant services than for the average population. Housekeeping was also identified as a high-risk occupation (Vézina and Gingras, 1996). Though these studies are significant in terms of overall health in the sector in those countries reviewed, more research is needed before drawing conclusions on the health impact of violence and stress in the hotel and catering sector.

7. Causes of stress

Few studies on detailed causes and conditions leading up to violence and stress in this sector have been published. This is particularly the case for stress. It should also be noted that the use of cross-sectional survey methods or interviews in the studies that are available does not allow drawing firm conclusions with respect to cause-and-effect relationships.

General sources of stress

While some studies have explored a range of stressors typically present in the sector, the majority have focused on one or a few and explored their causes in more depth.

Faulkner and Patiar (1997) studied sources of stress among front-of-house and housekeeping staff in four-star international standard hotels on the Gold Coast of Australia. The following were reported as sources of stress: too much work to do; misuse of time by other people; lack of consultation or communication; inadequate feedback; and being undervalued. The personal lives of the employees were found to have little bearing on their susceptibility to stress at work. Front-of-house employees reported exposure to more diverse stressors than their housekeeping colleagues, including dealing with ambiguous situations, coping with office politics, staff shortages and inadequate guidance from superiors. Both the very nature of the front-of-house work and the fact that these employees were younger and worked longer hours than housekeeping staff may explain why they experienced more stress.

Management behaviour was indicated as the principal source of stress by a group of 102 front-line employees in 14 Australian tourist sites (Law, Pearce and Woods, 1995). Based on the answers given to open-ended questions, the majority of the respondents saw “poor management”, such as a lack of communication, recognition and interest, as a source of work stress. Other sources were: arrogance among clients (30%), very hectic work, people failing to listen, disorderly crowds, job insecurity and boring work.

Emotional labour

A key characteristic of many jobs in the hospitality sector is that employees are paid not only to perform physical and mental operations at work, but also to display positive emotions as part of their job performance even in difficult situations. The industry has therefore been particularly associated with what is referred to as emotional labour, which may be defined as the “management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display” (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7).

In the above-mentioned qualitative research, emotional labour was found among flight attendants to be at the root of such problems as substance abuse, headaches and absenteeism. This indicates that coping with a demand for “emotional labour” can create stress. This view has been supported by many later studies, (e.g. Zapf, 1999), some of which have been undertaken specifically in the hospitality sector.

Seymour (2000) conducted a qualitative study on emotional labour among 24 employees in a fast-food restaurant and in a traditional restaurant. The hypothesis was that the personalized service of the traditional restaurant was more demanding on staff than the more standardized methods of the fast-food chain. Results showed, however, that it is impossible to conclude which kind of work is the most demanding and stressful. One cause of stress found in both environments was a lack of training and guidance in how to manage one’s emotions.

By contrast, a questionnaire study by Adelman (1995) among a group of waiters in the United States (N=90) showed that emotional labour was actually related to positive feelings and satisfaction about one’s job. When checked against other job factors, which might be sources of negative feelings, no relationship was found between the demand for emotional labour and levels of job satisfaction, alienation or performance.

Similarly, in a German study of emotions at work based on a sample of 175 hotel workers, predominantly front-line staff (waiters and receptionists), the general conclusion was that client oriented work, when judged from a stress perspective, should not be considered either positive or negative *per se* (Zapf et al., 1999); emotional work is also associated with positive experiences and personal accomplishment. However, where there is a dissonance or mismatch between actual emotions being experienced and emotions expected by the organization to be displayed, the outcome may manifest itself in psychological strain.

Lack of control at work

In a survey of employees and managers working in four Canadian hotels (N=161) rated four stars or above, the major stressor was found to be role ambiguity (Zohar, 1994). Other important stressors were low decision latitude, followed by workload. Role conflict, on the other hand, was found to have no impact. A work situation characterized by high ambiguity and low decision latitude, implying a lack of control over demands combined with a lack of authority to make decisions, was seen as a strong predictor of work stress. The results support a cognitive model (e.g. Lazarus and Folkman, 1984), which claims that stress arises when demands exceed available resources in a situation where personal costs are associated with the failure to provide for these demands.

Zohar (1994) claims that such lack of control is in the unique nature of work in hotels, which is characterized by the need to co-ordinate efforts between different departments and employees in a short timeframe, while at the same time having low levels of control over these other service providers. In other words, stress arises from being in charge without being in control. The model explains the situation in hotels similarly but more thoroughly than Karasek’s demand-control model which suggests that stress results from a combination of high workload and low decision latitude (e.g. Karasek, 1979).

Quantitative overload combined with a lack of skill utilization lead to stress where work is repetitive, like in catering. The feeling experienced is not unsimilar to that of lack of control. Isaksen (2000), however, found that a feeling of ‘meaningfulness’ might reduce stress in this sub-sector. In order to explore whether being able to personally construct ‘meaningfulness’ around one’s work could affect levels of stress, Isaksen carried out a qualitative study of 30 employees in a Danish catering company, whose jobs were to

prepare cold dishes, pack cutlery, wash dishes, etc. While ‘meaninglessness’ was experienced by a significant minority of the participants, three out of four felt ‘meaningfulness’ particularly associated with factors such as feeling attached to the work place, engagement in social relations deriving from the work place, seeing work as part of a larger whole, or deriving pride from what they were doing. ‘Meaninglessness,’ on the other hand, was strongly associated with self-reported stress symptoms such as muscular pains and depression.

Burnout

“Burnout” is a feeling of ‘being drained or used up’ (Ledgerwood, Crotts and Everett, 1998). It has been defined as ‘a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among individuals who work with other people (Maslach, 1993, p.70). Burnout is thus associated with a loss of trust and interest in others, often combined with a cynical attitude towards one’s environment. Several recent studies have focused on this particular stress problem in the hospitality sector.

For example, a study based on a representative sample of 96 front-line staff in seven large hotels in New Zealand explored the ranking between employees’ perceptions of their work environment and burnout (Ledgerwood et al., 1998). The authors concluded that employee perceptions of fairness and cohesion, followed by social support, trust and recognition, were more important factors to alleviate burnout than aspects of the physical work environment. They argue that, since such factors are to a greater extent under the control of, and open to influence by, management, this can be considered a promising finding from the viewpoint of management and the organization.

The issue of burnout among middle managers was also addressed in a study by Buick and Thomas (2001), conducted among managers in four hotels in the state of Ohio (United States) that were rated four stars or above (N=103). Here, the risk factors in experiencing burnout were: age (being young); gender (being female); marital status (being single or divorced); new in the managerial position; working in front office, food production and beverage service departments; low social support from family or superiors; and dissatisfaction with monetary remuneration.

The concept of ‘time-urgency’ and its relationship with ‘burnout’ and other personal and organizational features was explored in a study of 393 travel agents in the United States (Conte et al., 2001). Time-urgency is a concept associated with time-pressure and how to utilize available time most effectively and productively. The study revealed that ‘general hurry’, one of the five underlying dimensions of the concept, was associated with burnout and exhaustion as well as with depersonalisation. In general, women scored higher on the ‘general hurry’ dimension than did men.

Home – work interface

Boles and Babin (1996) studied the impact of work-family conflicts, role conflicts and role ambiguity as predictors of job satisfaction. The study was conducted as a postal survey of a population of customers and employees with direct customer contact in middle-of-the-range (price-wise) restaurants in the southeastern part of the United States. Of 400 questionnaires sent out, 257 were completed and returned. The results showed that employees experiencing high levels of role conflict and role ambiguity reported many work-family-conflicts, as well as low job satisfaction. The effect of role conflict and ambiguity on job satisfaction seems therefore to be mediated by work-family-conflicts.

The study concludes that work-family-conflicts are highly relevant in relationships between factors at work and employee job satisfaction.

Sources of stress associated with occupations or job roles

Some studies have attempted to identify sources of stress associated with particular occupations such as waiter, kitchen staff, or manager.

Relationships between waiters and kitchen staff are commonly conflictive (Vogt, in press), as their stress levels do not peak at the same time. A United States study shows that jokes made by kitchen staff on waiters when these are particularly pressurized fuel the conflict between the groups (Brown and Keegan, 1999).

In a study by Law, Pearce and Woods (1995) among a group of 102 front-line employees in 14 Australian tourist sites (as mentioned earlier), some characteristics of the work were also sources of stress, in addition to a lack of leadership. Such factors were especially related to the high volume and variety of interpersonal contact.

Brymer et al. (1991) showed that managers in the hotel industry found their job highly stressful for numerous reasons. Unclear job descriptions, long working hours, lack of support, constant interaction with others, and difficult customers and employees explained the stress symptoms in a group of 409 managers from 23 hotels in the United States. The authors concluded that stress management programmes and measures allowing staff more responsibility and control over their own work were necessary in order to reduce stress levels in this industry. An important finding was that attempts at positive coping, such as prioritising of tasks, making appropriate changes to one's work, exercising and having hobbies, did not appear to affect stress-outcomes. This suggests a need for increased work control.

Perceptions of managers in Chinese restaurants in Hong Kong, China, (Lam, Baum and Pine, 2001) were studied by means of a questionnaire distributed to 171 managers. Most reported they were satisfied with their job. Low job satisfaction where it occurred was predicted by a negative working climate and social environment in the restaurant; low levels of authority and similar aspects, autonomy, independence and variety, and a lack of rewards such as fringe benefits, salary elements, job security, and status). By contrast, personal management characteristics, such as lack of ability and sense of achievement were found not to be related to low job satisfaction. The study highlights the need for more research in this field to address problems in different sub-sectors and cultural environments.

Stress among room-attendants

The room attendant's job is often very stressful (e.g. Lee and Krause, 2002). Typically, it involves pressure from a fast pace of work to complete the required number of rooms in a pre-established short time and to the expected standard of cleanliness. There is considerable physical strain as furniture may need to be moved and some tasks involve unusual postures. The need to supply each room with a variety of goods and articles has tended to increase with a growing emphasis on facilities to be available in the room, requiring heavier trolleys to be moved about. Attendants often face conflicting demands from guests and housekeeping management or may have to deal with embarrassing situations in the rooms. Fluctuations in demand need to be coped with as a greater use of casual staff to compensate for fluctuations in demand is seen by many to impact negatively on the social relations in the work environment (e.g.; Dølvik, 1995; Hoel, 1993). A 49

year-old chambermaid describes her work as: "... seldom noticed except when customers complain. ... The work is dirty, smelly and repetitive. We work alone and the work is pretty hard physically. However, we have many social interactions during the day so we do not get lonely, and some of the work in the kitchen is actually harder. But you know, we are pretty special, the chambermaids I mean. Not everyone could stand doing what we do."

8. Causes of sexual harassment

Most empirical studies on violence carried out in hotels, restaurants, bars etc. are related to the issue of sexual harassment.

It is mainly women in junior positions who experience this problem, which indicates that it has to do with both gender and power issues. It is also typical of the industry that much of the unwanted behaviour is exhibited by customers (Einarsen, Raknes and Matthiesen, 1993; Hoel and Cooper, 2000). Female and young employees with low levels of formal education are less confident than other employees when dealing with difficult people who are in positions of power, such as management and customers (Gilbert, Guerrier and Guy, 1998). Factors such as working hours (evening and night), dress code and a suggestive physical environment may also play a role.

A study among hospitality managers in the United States showed that the majority saw sexual harassment as pervasive in the industry. Hart (1993) argues that "sexiness" and "flirting" are encouraged as part of the job in the service industries, maintaining a thin dividing line between normal service and sexuality. Similarly, Folgero and Fjeldstad (1995) argue that prevailing social norms of service organizations are a major cause of such problems. In many cases, employees are not allowed to perceive themselves as victims of "harassment." Being exposed to unwanted sexually related attention is considered to be part of the job. In line with this, it is often argued that a breeding ground for sexual harassment is provided by the closeness of many jobs in the industry to traditionally perceived feminine roles (e.g. Gilbert et al., 1998). The employee is supposed to be gentle, caring, pleasant and accommodating. Caring for the needs of customers to an extent that exceeds their expectations is a frequently expressed objective of the industry. Also, where customers are enjoying a rather close relationship to a staff member, they may easily perceive themselves to be in a private context where people meet on a personal level. Taken together, such factors create a situation with a high risk of sexual harassment, and simultaneously make it difficult for anyone to socially condemn a given behaviour and take sanctions. This lack of control on the part of staff additionally worsens the impact of the experience on the individual who may feel left alone.

Folgero and Fjeldstad (1995) tested the hypothesis outlined above by interviewing randomly 10 first-year students at the Norwegian College of Hotel Management. All had at least two years working experience with customer contact. All interviewees described harassment situations they had experienced. However, a majority initially did not admit the character of the situation as harassment, but dismissed the episodes as negligible. According to the authors, there appears to be a tacit norm demanding that guests should be satisfied and kept happy at all costs. However, none of the respondents had protested when the offensive behaviour was enacted by supervisors or managers either. Interestingly, all ten interviewees claimed they would have reacted stronger if the same episode had occurred in other settings but in the hospitality industry.

A survey conducted among 220 personnel directors drawn from the Hospitality Industry Yearbook showed that 75% viewed sexual harassment as a serious management issue. Although 72% of the companies taking part in the study had a policy, more than half of them had not disseminated it amongst their staff. The result is a high level of de-facto acceptance in many companies of such behaviour as teasing, jokes and remarks with

sexual connotations. It is, however, often perceived as sexual harassment by junior female staff especially when deployed by personnel in positions of power. As many as 90% of the companies, however, provided some kind of training in the form of meetings or written information on how to deal with difficult customers.

Sexual harassment of British hotel employees by customers was studied by Guerrier and Adib (2000). They interviewed 15 (nine women and six men) third-year undergraduate students on a BA programme in Hotel Management who had recently returned from a year of industrial placement. The study concluded that the hotel is not a rational environment where there is agreement over social norms or acceptable behaviour between customers and staff. The hotel was rather seen as a highly sexualised setting with a “message” of satisfying every need of the customers, which may suggest to customers that sexual favours may be included. Receptionists and chambermaids or housekeeping staff is particularly prone to approaches by guests asking for sexual favours. According to the authors of this study, several factors may contribute to a low level of respect for such groups of staff, e.g. the very nature of the work, jobs predominantly held by women, the low status of the work and, in some cases, being a member of an ethnic minority. Male staff in such roles as receptionists, room service attendants or porters also reported having experienced sexual harassment from guests. However, among both male and female members of staff, while such abuse appears to be relatively common, it is seldom discussed openly with management.

Similarly, a study by Giuffre and Williams (1994) concluded from interviews with 18 restaurant waiters in Austin, Texas (USA), that most of these employees worked in a highly sexualised environment. The study also illustrated the role of power and social inequality in experiences of sexual harassment. However, it seemed that many of the interviewees were active participants in the sexualised culture themselves. Certain factors therefore needed to be present for sexual advances to be labelled by them as sexual harassment:

- the perpetrator exploited a powerful position for personal gain;
- the perpetrator was of different ethnicity or race than the target;
- the perpetrator was of a different sexual orientation, e.g. a gay man making advances to a straight man;
- violence or the threat of violence was being used.

The study concludes that, although many women may enjoy public forms of sexual engagement, the prevailing culture with its norms based on heterosexual and often latent racist norms tends to protect privileged groups in society from charges of sexual harassment while oppressing less powerful groups.

The often ambiguous nature of the work and the constant pressures on employees to deal amicably with unwanted and unpleasant situations is illustrated by the case described in Box 1.

Box 1
Dealing amicably with unwanted sexual attention

Guerrier and Adib (2000) describe in the words of Amy, a woman in her early twenties working as a hotel receptionist, how customers can be unpleasant and rude without the worker being able to defend herself or even stand up to such behaviour:

A man at a wedding reception approached the receptionist with the question "What are you doing tonight? What time do you finish?" Then he asked:

"How much is a single room?"

"£70 sir."

"Actually, I might need a double room, depending on when you finish."

The following typical answer shows how the receptionist cannot respond in an honest way and how she has to keep on smiling and play along, even though she may privately resent the situation and be upset and anxious:

"Well, I am rather tired tonight, and I've got an early shift tomorrow."

9. Causes of violence and bullying

In a search of the literature, fewer empirical studies on violence and bullying emerged than was the case for sexual harassment.

It is often emphasized that a number of situational factors commonly associated with physical violence (Chappell and Di Martino, 2000) are present in the hospitality industry (Hobson, 1996):

- exchange of money;
- working alone or in small groups;
- working late nights or early mornings;
- being located in high-crime areas;
- high number of young workers.

It is not surprising therefore, that there is a widespread perception among criminals that hotel and catering facilities represent easy and soft targets (Hobson, 1996).

An example of how working alone exposed a fast food worker to violence was reported by The Norwegian newspaper "Bergens Tidende" (10 January, 2002) from a court case as described in Box 2.

Box 2
Violence against fast-food staff

The Norwegian newspaper "Bergens Tidende" (10 January, 2002), reported a court case ruling in which a young man was rewarded compensation after being sacked from his company following a violent incident at work. The man, aged 19, worked alone in a small fast-food kitchen owned by a chain, serving cold drinks, hamburgers, hot-dogs and sweets. According to company policy, employees are not allowed to let customers or non-employees into the kitchen and other company premises. One Friday evening, another young man already known to this employee started to pester a female customer. The young employee opened the door of the kitchen to help his customer. The other young man entered the kitchen and became violent. The employee was seriously hurt, sent for medical treatment and ordered to take two weeks sick-leave. Soon afterwards, he was informed by his manager that he was sacked from his job. The reason given was that he had been disloyal and had broken a basic company rule by letting an outsider into the kitchen.

Violence and bullying amongst co-workers are widespread especially in kitchens as can be seen from a large-scale “straw poll” of the United Kingdom hospitality industry (Johns and Menzel, 1999). An interview study among chefs working in high-quality British restaurants concludes that the kitchen is a highly stressful place with occurrence of abusive and violent interaction usually instigated by the chef. The kitchen is crowded, noisy and hot. This combination is regarded as a typical potential cause of aggression. Additional factors are the pressure to speedily deliver quantity and high quality. The strict hierarchy and the notion of the chef as ‘an artist’ whose bullying and abusive behaviour must be understood as idiosyncratic, born out of artistry and creativity performed under great pressure, produces social norms in which a high level of violence and bullying on the part of the chef is somehow allowed. The culture of those kitchens is claimed to be further characterized by a tacit agreement that bullying is a necessary part of motivating staff and that physical and verbal abuse are necessary to induce discipline and hard work. Moreover, the experience of mistreatment is seen as inevitable and inescapable for those wanting to succeed working in a restaurant kitchen. An example of bullying in a restaurant kitchen is given in Box 3.

Box 3
Bullying in the restaurant kitchen

Box 3 Bullying in the restaurant kitchen In 1995, a film-crew from the British television company Channel 4, made a ‘fly-on-the-wall’ documentary about violence in top-class restaurant kitchens (Hotel and Caterer, 1995; Crawford, 1997). It revealed surprising episodes of violence, bullying and intimidation committed against their staff by some of Britain’s most famous chefs. In many cases the targets were the most vulnerable staff members, the youngest workers or those of ethnic minorities. Following the showing of the documentary, a lively debate took place in the professional press where it was suggested that this form of exposure could set the industry back ten years. The documentary revealed that abusive language and even physical violence in the form of slapping, punching and kicking were commonplace in the sector. In one instance the sous-chef (second in command) systematically verbally abuses a young foreign apprentice called Otis, in response to a minor mistake he has made. Frightened by this treatment, Otis made new mistakes, leading to a constant barrage of abuse from the chef. At one point the head chef himself decides to join in, drawing an imaginary line across the floor with his foot and indicating that Otis is not allowed under any circumstances to cross the line. In a final act of abuse against the apprentice, who at this stage is seen hiding in tears in a corner, the chef picks up a chopping board heaped with waste material and drops it on the top of Otis’s work-station, further humiliating him and preventing him from doing his job. For the viewer, one of the most disturbing features of the film was that throughout this and other episodes of abuse shown, no-one ever intervened on behalf of the target, but continued working as if nothing had happened.

A questionnaire study among a representative sample of 172 members of the Norwegian Union of Hotel and Restaurant workers showed that the occurrence of bullying at work was related to a range of psychosocial factors such as the general social climate at work, the level of workers’ satisfaction with the immediate supervisor, and the general level of conflict at work (Einarsen, Raknes and Matthiesen, 1994; Einarsen, Raknes, Matthiesen and Hellesøy, 1994). Two factors, ‘work control’ and ‘role conflict’, were particularly important as predictors of bullying. Both the targets and the observers of bullying were typically dissatisfied with the opportunities to influence how they perform their work tasks, the possibility of carrying out the job without interference from the superior and the opportunity to change those parts of their job that they do not like. In addition, they complained at contradictory expectations and demands or values imposed on them at work.

The influence of alcohol and drugs on violence

The consumption of alcohol and use of drugs are factors often identified as leading to violence. While there is some evidence supporting such a claim (e.g. Scott, 1998), the relationship between alcohol or drug abuse and violence appears to be complex, as the influence of alcohol and drugs by itself does not make people’s behaviour more aggressive

or violent in a given situation. However, as the perception of a situation may be obscured under the influence of substance abuse, it may be reasonably concluded that such abuse is a risk factor of violence (Lawrence and Leather, 1999). According to Leather et al. (1998), the problem is common in public houses (pubs), and often occurring in the period following 'last orders', i.e. the last minutes before closing time.

A factor closely associated with both violence and intoxication is the role of "bouncers", i.e. doormen and security personnel as an instrument of social control who are an integral part of the 'night-economy'. Under the thought-provoking title: "Bouncers: the art and economics of intimidation," these issues are explored in a British ethnographic study of the night-economy. According to Hobbs et al. (2002), while bouncers used violence themselves only occasionally despite being exposed to violent acts frequently, their potential for employing violent and disorderly means appears to be characteristic of their role, especially as they use "informal practices (not) based on legal or moral competencies" (p.3). Thus, they may be inducing violence by customers as they are seen to be violent themselves.

10. Under-reporting on violence

A number of different systems are in operation for the collection and reporting of data on incidents of violence, tailored to individual countries' models of labour protection or health and safety legislation. While it is beyond the scope of this report to explore the different models, this section briefly highlights some findings relevant to reporting of work-related stress and violence in the hospitality sector.

According to the UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE, 2001), in the case of the hotel and catering sector, fatalities and injuries leading to an absence of three or more days must be reported to local authorities. Under-reporting of non-fatal injuries, however, is a particular problem in the sector, with only 27% reported compared with a national average of 47%. For the catering industry alone the figure is even lower, at 23% compared with 60% for the manufacturing industry and 49% for the construction industry. The HSE suggests that confusion exists in the industry as to the range of accidents that should be reported, particularly when members of the public are involved or when injuries are in connection with physical violence against employees. As a result, a more user-friendly procedure for reporting of non-fatal injuries has been recently developed.

Scott (1998) suggests that under-reporting is a serious problem in the industry in the United Kingdom, with one in three respondents stating they were left with the feeling that violence was to be expected and associated with this type of job. Among other contributing factors were: extra administration involved; fear of losing one's job; shame on the part of the victim; and lack of support from employers. As job insecurity in the industry is an obstacle to reporting, employees and employers in some cases cooperate in covering up incidents. Moreover, fear of retribution is widespread (reported by 64% of respondents).

One other disturbing finding was that, while no incident in which workers were targeted was reported to the police, it was not uncommon for the police to be notified when a manager was the target. Scott suggests that assaults on employees may be taken less seriously than those where a manager is involved.

11. Prevention, reduction, management and coping strategies

This survey has not uncovered any study that has yet systematically explored and evaluated strategies for the prevention and reduction of stress and violence within the hotel

and catering industry. However, preventive action is often presented in connection with the discussion of particular research findings.

Prevention of stress

According to Buick and Thomas (2001), most respondents in their study of burnout among United States managers reported their organization to be supportive through training and organizational development programmes. Employing more human resources professionals was also a means of support.

Faulkner and Patiar (1997) argue that empowerment may be a strategy for stress reduction, as it may permit staff to respond more directly to customer needs. Training and a consultative style of management are mentioned among the means to achieve empowerment.

Similarly, to improve job satisfaction among managers, Lam et al. (2001) suggest the following remedies: development of business ownership by means of shares in profits; provision of more interesting and challenging management jobs with variety and flexibility as well as greater authority, and a need for further training and development programmes.

Humour is a factor which, according to a United States study of 13 members of a “kitchen brigade”, may function as a coping mechanism and thus relieve stress and hostile emotions, as well as boredom (Brown and Keegan, 1999). The study, which combined questionnaires with (non-participative) observation and interviews, also concluded, however, that humour is apparently more frequently used by people in positions of power and could, at times, function as a disciplinary tool.

To reduce stress, Boles and Babin (1997) suggest alleviating the work-family conflict through the following strategies:

- more flexible work schedules;
- occasional weekends off, even for unmarried employees;
- giving employees more authority and flexibility with respect to dealing with customers;
- more supportive work environments.

Prevention of violence and harassment

Organizational policies to prevent violence and harassment include measures to ensure that complaints are dealt with seriously and sympathetically. By contrast, an absence of such policies often reflects a lack of awareness and may in some cases be considered a cause of harassment and victimization on its own (e.g. Folgero and Fjeldstad, 1995).

Hobson (1996) analysed the occurrence of violence in the hospitality sector and points to the following preventive action:

- reduce operations in high-risk areas and do not operate during particularly high-risk times;
- form strategic alliances with other establishments to prevent crime, e.g. joint security operations and warning systems;
- undertake security check-ups on a daily basis;

-
- train all managers and supervisors on how to respond to threats of violence or violent incidents;
 - establish crisis management teams to be available on call;
 - install adequate lighting, alarms, and surveillance cameras (CCT).

Hobson also suggests that a policy of identifying potentially violent individuals should be introduced. However, such policies are controversial. While there may be some currency in applying them in certain situations, they may be open to abuse (Di Martino, Hoel and Cooper, 2003).

To counteract violence associated with working alone, WorkCover (1998) propose the following actions:

- avoid working alone as far as possible;
- introduce counters which offer sufficient protection;
- install systems of emergency communication;
- employ security staff;
- limit public access to buildings;
- install and monitor surveillance equipment;
- ensure that all exchange of money takes place in visible areas;
- ensure safe entrance and leaving areas, including adequate lighting at car-parks;
- train staff in recognizing potentially dangerous situations and how situations with aggressive or violent customers may be diffused or de-escalated;
- set standards for acceptable client behaviour.

Half of all incidents of violence in public recorded in Norway happen inside or directly outside establishments belonging to the hospitality industry. Accordingly, they are often connected with abuse of alcohol or drugs. A joint initiative by representatives of the employers' organization, the trade union, the social security services and the police (Hotell- og Restaurantarbeideren, 2002, no.5, p.9) seek to address the situation. A newly developed course labelled 'the responsible host' has had strong support and input from employees of the sector. While courses have so far been offered to key personnel in the establishments only, the aim is to eventually offer them to all employees. The project has received financial support from a state-sponsored programme promoting the development of employee competences (Kompetanseutviklings-programmet). As a result of this initiative, a number of businesses have started offering courses especially to door-staff (bouncers).

A similar development is reported from Denmark where, according to the Danish Hotel and Restaurant Sector's Association (RBF), courses in conflict resolution and other work-related issues initiated by the Danish police may soon become available for hotel and restaurant staff (Hotell- og Restaurantarbeideren, 5, 2002).

Prevention of bullying

The introduction of anti-bullying policies has been seen as a key pillar in bullying prevention. (For a discussion on different approaches to bullying prevention see Rayner, Hoel and Cooper, 2002 and Einarsen, Hoel, Zapf and Cooper, 2003). The few points listed below (e.g. Rayner, Hoel and Cooper, 2002) are suggested key elements of a policy taken

from general workplace approaches only, because no sector-specific examples of preventive actions on this issue could be obtained:

- a statement by management to show a commitment to prevention and emphasize that bullying behaviour will not be tolerated;
- the policy should involve and be developed jointly with all sections of the workforce;
- a definition and examples of bullying behaviour should be made available;
- victims should be reassured of fairness, non-recrimination and confidentiality;
- guidance on informal and formal complaints procedures should be provided;
- staff should be informed on how the policy is monitored and its impact reviewed.

Further needs

As far as both stress and violence in hotels and catering are concerned, there is certainly a real need for further research on the issues of prevention, reduction, management and coping. In order to conduct such research successfully, however, more descriptive information on the phenomenon itself must first be provided and for a wider geographic area. Secondly, more information is needed on the causes and consequences of these problems. Effective intervention may only be accomplished through the development of theoretically and empirically sound models of the causes and effects involved. General models of both stress and violence do exist, but they must be developed and tested in the particular work environment of this industry, as described in this report.

Not every possible cause of stress or violence at work (including bullying and sexual harassment) may be easily eliminated. More information is needed regarding possible intervention programmes and the benefits and costs associated with different strategies. Hence, there is an urgent requirement to develop intervention theories within this industry, as well as empirical data on their effectiveness. Systematic research on violence and stress-related issues in the hotel, catering and tourism industry is paramount to the satisfaction, health and well-being of employees and the future success and growth of the sector.

The conclusions that may be drawn from all of the studies quoted here are that employee empowerment, job enrichment, and training of both employees and managers, all seem to be reasonable measures that can help to reduce stress and increase job satisfaction in this industry. However, the relatively few studies undertaken so far, the low number of respondents in most studies, the low number of studies outside of Europe and North America, the use of non-representative samples and the frequent use of cross-sectional survey data, make it difficult to draw any stronger conclusions.

12. References

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13. Websites for further information

13.1 Hospitality Sector

Title	Web Address	Comments
International Hotel and Restaurant Association	http://www.ih-ra.com/	Homepage. The Paris-based IH&RA is representative for the hotel and restaurant sector worldwide.
International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations	http://www.iuf.org	Homepage. The Geneva, Switzerland-based IUF, is currently composed of 336 trade unions in 120 countries representing a combined membership of over 12 million workers.
Union Network International (UNI) sectoral activities – tourism		International coverage of news and reports from the tourism sector.
Tripartite meeting on Human Resources Development, Employment and Globalisation in the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Sector	http://www.ilo.org/public/english/dialogue/sector/techmeet/tmhct01/index.htm	ILO tripartite meetings comprise representatives of governments, employers and workers to discuss current employment and labour issues of importance in the sector and to provide guidance for action at national and international levels.
The North American Union of Hospitality Workers	http://www.hereunion.org	Homepage. Union representing approximately 265,000 hospitality industry workers from 111 affiliated Local Unions across the United States and Canada.
OSH Answers Hotel Laundry, Canada		Advice on working hazards in hotel laundries: general information.
Archives Hotel Workers	http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~lohp/In_The_Spotlight/Hotel_Workers_Study/hotel_workers_study.html	US study on hotel workers stress
Workplace Violence: leisure sector	http://www.workplaceviolence.co.uk/sector_1.htm	Case study

Workplace Violence: hospitality sector UK	http://www.workplaceviolence.co.uk/ sector_ho.htm	Case study
Archives Hotel Workers	http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~lohp/ In_The_Spotlight/Hotel_Workers_Study/hotel_workers_study.html	US study on hotel workers stress
Workplace Violence: leisure sector	http://www.workplaceviolence.co.uk/ sector_l.htm	Case study
Workplace Violence: hospitality sector UK	http://www.workplaceviolence.co.uk/ sector_ho.htm	Case study

13.2 General and other sectors

Title	Web Address	Comments
Trades Union Congress (TUC) online	www.tuc.org.uk	Homepage. Representing more than 70 member unions and nearly seven million working people from all walks of life, the TUC campaigns for a fair deal at work and for social justice at home and abroad.
Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	http://www.hse.gov.uk	Homepage. The UK Health and Safety Executive (HSE) are responsible for the regulation of almost all the risks to health and safety arising from work activity in Britain.
Australian Institute of Criminology Occupational violence in Australia an annotated bibliography of prevention policies Workplace violence		AIC bibliography occupational violence (overview on international literature and Australian initiatives)
Fourth Network Meeting of the WHO Collaborating Centres in Occupational Health		Findings from British Crime Survey 2000 General information on Occupational Health and Safety
OSH Answers Workplace Stress - General EU stress Agency report CA: OSH Answers Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)		General information on stress European report on stress. Canadian OHS. EAP not sector-specific.

ILO: Sexual Harassment,
violence and stress -
conditions of Work

ILO Sectoral Activities
Department [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/
dialogue/sector/themes/violence.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/
dialogue/sector/themes/violence.htm)

US job stress information <http://www.stress.org/job.htm>

Annotated bibliography by ILO
violence and stress at work.

Job stress - general information.

Australian Council of Trade <http://actu.labor.net.au>
Unions

AFL-CIO www.aflcio.org

NIOSH Workplace Safety
and Health

Homepage. Australia's Union
Movement.

Homepage. America's Union
Movement.

Homepage. National Institute for
Occupational Safety and Health
(US).