Well-being through work
Gender differences and occupational safety
Gender and workplace accidents

N=419620 (2010-2013)

(Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions)
Fatal workplace accidents in Finland

![Graph showing fatal workplace accidents in Finland by gender from 2006 to 2013. The graph indicates a general decrease in fatal accidents over the years.]

- Men
- Women

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013
Occupational accidents: Length of disability

N = 419,620 (2010-2013)

(Federation of Accident Insurance Institutions)
Gender and accident risks

• According to previous reviews
Men have 3 times higher risk of occupational accident than women

• Fatal accidents
  • Men face 13 times more than women

Why?
  - More dangerous work (construction, agriculture)
  - Do men tend to take more risks than women?
Gender and accident risks – what different studies tell us

• Statistics indicate that men have an increased risk of work-related accidents (Simth & Mustard, 2004)

• 96% of fatal accidents occur to men and 76% of non-fatal
  • even though 54% of the workforce are men (Oortwijn et al. 2011)
When men and women perform same work (earlier studies)

According to Zwerling: postal employees

- Compared to men, women had increased risk for occupational injuries
- The increased risk for women were noted only during the first year of employment

Discussion: it is possible that women are more likely than men to report minor occupational injuries


- Men are more prone to violate safety regulations
- Masculinity is more than risk-taking
Human errors at work – a case study from warehouse

• Question: Have you prevented accident -> women answered significantly more often “I have not faced these occasions”

• Question: Why accidents or incidents happen in your workplace -> women answered more often
  • “problems with machines, equipment or system”
  • “essential things are unnoticed”
Protection of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding


- A study about safety and health directives on national level in EU countries

- Findings from Finland:
  - No significant differences because of the size of the workplace
  - No measures to facilitate compliance
  - Women do not breastfeed at work (in practice the alternatives are not to work or quit breastfeeding).
Women at risk: Commuting

• 1.4 * more commuting accidents for women than for men (per 1000 workers)
  • Especially women over 50 years: 2.5 * more than for men
  • Most typical type of injury: falling (75%)
Women at risk: Violence at work

Violence at work

- The research has been conducted since 1980’s
- Violence at work has increased from

  - Women: from 1980 1.5% to 2003 7%
  - Health and Social care
  - Education

For women:

- 50% of violence was threats
- Over half of the violence were done by clients of patients

[Victims of accidents in Finland. 2009]
Haste as a risk factor

How often do you have to hurry to get your work done?

- never
- quite rare
- occasionally
- quite often
- very often

N=2376
Material transfers

N = 538 159
(2003-2007)

Perttula & Salminen. 2012. JOSE
Discussion

• In general: gender issues are not very typically taken into account on occupational safety questions
• Physical demands of certain professions affect the male-domination (for example waste transport drivers)
• Finnish workplaces do not very often have differentiation on the basis of gender in OSH issues

• The importance of safety communication
• Risk assessment: including individual features
Thank you!

taxi

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