

## **Analysis of hotspots related to nurses' exposure to workplace violence: a Citespace-based bibliometric analysis**

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Article received on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2024.

Revision received on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

Accepted on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2024.

### **ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:** To analyze the current situation and hotspot analysis of international research related to workplace violence in acute care, to provide a reference basis for nursing staff to carry out clinical work and related research. **METHODS:** Based on the core journal literature related to workplace violence suffered by nurses in (Web of Science Core Collection, WOSCC)), the search time frame was from 1st January 2003 to 1st January 2024, and with the help of CiteSpace 6.2.R.4 software, bibliometric and cluster analysis. **RESULTS:** A total of 1991 articles were included in the literature, the number of documents contained in Web of Science showed a trend of growth year by year, and the cooperation between authors formed a different perspective of the research; the co-cited literature in this field formed a knowledge base; the keyword clustering analysis suggests that the connection between hotspots is more dispersed, more research orientated and less comprehensive; recent research hotspots have evolved in line with advances in the field and related disciplines. **CONCLUSION:** There are more theoretical and cross-sectional studies in the field of workplace violence among nurses, and intervention and longitudinal studies still need to be strengthened. Each country should also keep up with international developments, study the influencing factors of related problems according to its situation, and propose suitable interventions, which will also provide a reference for further extensive and in-depth research on workplace violence.

**Keywords:** Workplace violence; Nurse, Citespace.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Workplace violence ( WPV ) is one of the most challenging challenges and maybe one of the most fatal hazards that contemporary nurses in the healthcare system confront. Boyle (Malcolm J. Boyle & Jaime Wallis, 2016) defined workplace violence as abuse, threats, or attacks on staff in their workplace, that resulted in explicit or implicit challenges to their safety, well-being, or health, including physical and psychological harm. As a social security problem, workplace violence widely occurs in various industries. According to statistics, the incidence of workplace violence in the health industry is about 8-35%, and violence in the health industry is widespread in all countries and all positions in the health industry (M. C. Lim, M. S. Jeffree, S. S. Saupin, N. Giloi, & K. A. Lukman, 2022). In recent years, there has been an increase in the amount of focus placed on the problem of nurses being subjected to violence on the job. Approximately one-quarter of registered nurses (RNs) report having been physically assaulted by a patient or family member, and more than half of RNs report having been bullied or exposed to verbal abuse at some point in their careers. Even though they are the ones who are primarily responsible for providing patients with treatment that may save their lives, it is estimated that 17.2% of nurses abandon their professions each year due to violence in the workplace (Inc. NSI Nursing Solutions, 2019). Out of concern for the high-incidence sector, there have been several studies related to WPV. This study was based on the Web of Science core database and used Cite Space software to conduct an econometric analysis of international related studies, to analyze and summarize the results of international research related to WPV in emergency medicine, and to provide a reference for future research.

### 2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1 Data source

The data of this paper comes from the Web of Science core database. Web of Science database is one of the most authoritative citation databases in the world today, which contains the most influential core academic journals in natural science, biomedicine, and other fields. The research object of this paper is the literature related to nurses who suffer from workplace violence. The search period was from January 2003 to January 2024, with a literature period of 20 years. Using a thematic search, the following themes were used: "workplace violence", OR "hospital violence", OR "occupational violence" AND "nurse" OR "nurse staff" as search terms, and finally obtained 1991 valid documents after screening conference papers, letters, and news report languages.

#### 2.2 Methodology of Literature Analysis

The literature analysis tools for this study were the search and analysis function of the Web of Science database and Cite Space visualization software. The search result analysis function provided by the Web of Science database was used to analyze the

trend of publication and the number of articles in journals of the searched literature that met the inclusion criteria; Cite Space was used to draw the author cooperation map, knowledge base map, keyword co-occurrence map and the emergent word list.

### 3.0 RESULT

#### 3.1 Trends in publications in the WPV area

The results of the search were collated using Excel software and analyzed in terms of the number of articles per year utilizing a trend chart. The results indicate that there is currently no saturation of research on workplace violence against nurses in the literature contained in the Web of Science. Furthermore, there is a trend of annual growth in the literature overall, with a total of 216 articles published up to December 2023 (Fig. 1).

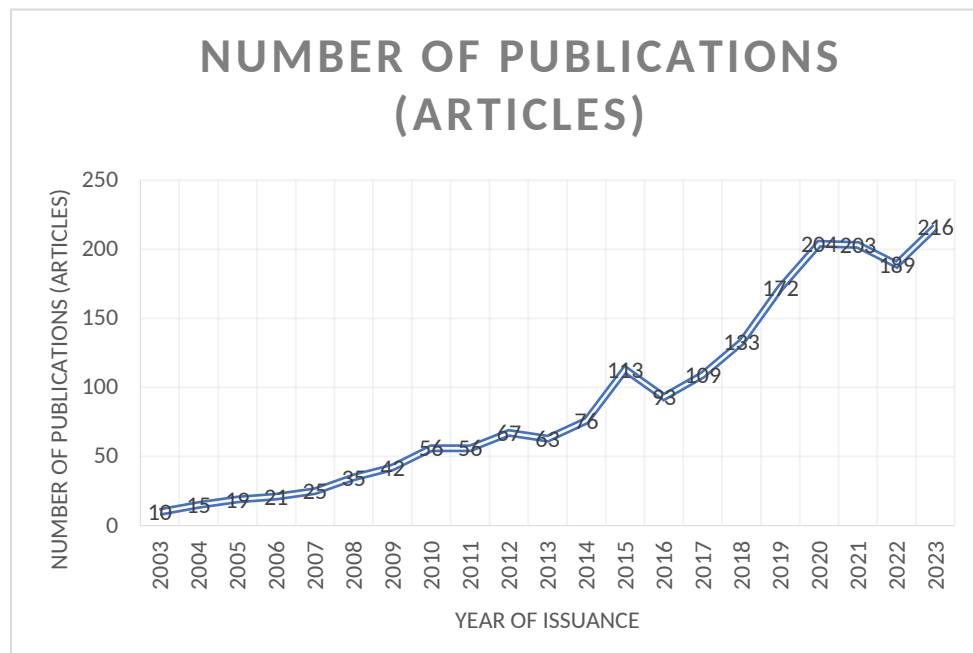


Fig.1 Graph of trends in violent communications in the workplace

#### 3.2 Author Contributions in the WPV Field

Author cooperation map can help researchers identify potential collaborators, and it is found that most authors only cooperate with a few authors. Jiao Mingli has published 13 papers with the most cooperation. (Fig. 2).

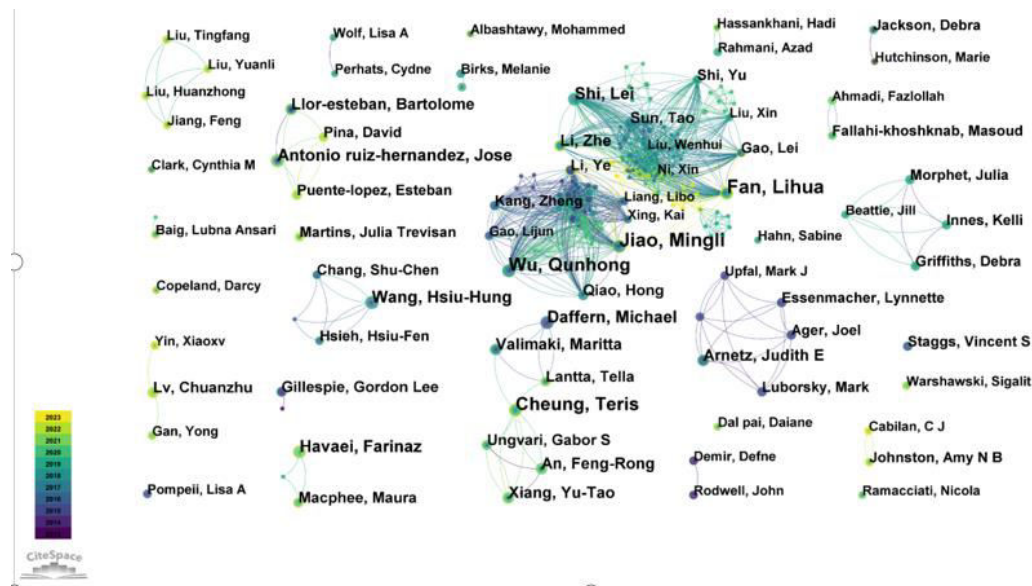


Fig.2 Collaboration chart of authors with a high number of WPV publications

### 3.3 WPV Domain Knowledge Base

Literature list information was obtained through the "Generate a narrative" operation in Cite Space, and centrality, burstiness, and citation frequency were used to derive important literature information. In bibliometrics, cited literature is usually used as the knowledge base.

#### 2.3.1 Co-cited literature mapping in WPV domains

In this study, the cited literature is used as the node, and the citations of the selected literature are analysed through Cite Space to generate the WPV co-cited literature map (Fig. 3).

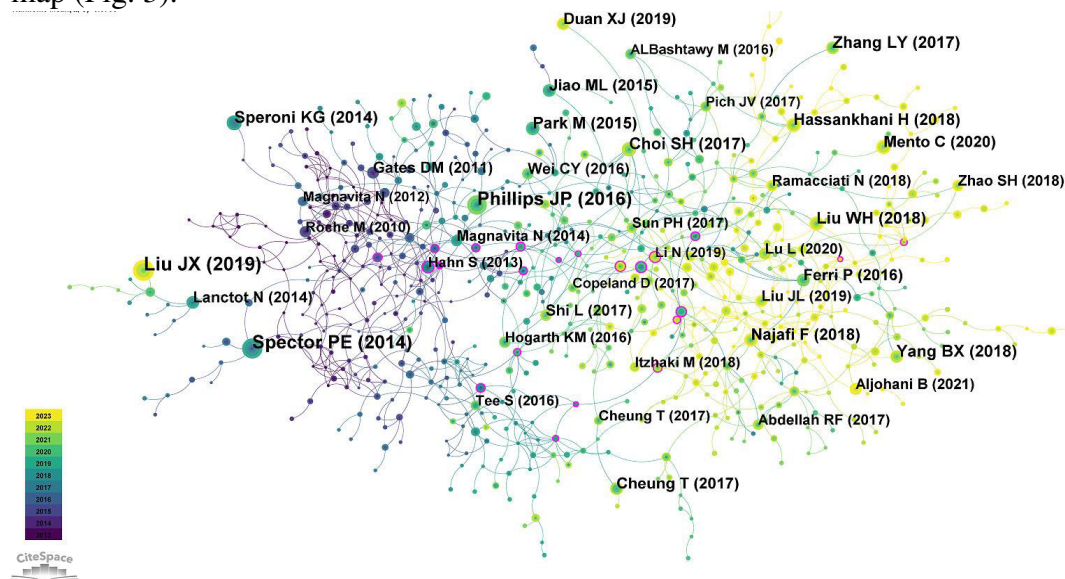


Fig.3 Co-citation mapping in the field of WPV

### 3.3.2 Highly co-cited literature in the WPV domain

Based on the frequency of co-citation, the top 6 co-cited documents were selected and plotted in a table (Table 1). The research methods of the current situation analysis of WPV, the measures against workplace violence, the cost analysis after workplace violence, the impact on the quality of work life, and turnover intention are mainly review and cross-sectional analysis

Table 1 List of Top 6 Highly Cited Literature in the field of WPV

Count	Year	Cited References
102	2019	Liu JX, 2019, OCCUP ENVIRON MED, V76, P927, DOI 10.1136/oemed-2019-105849
94	2014	Spector PE, 2014, INT J NURS STUD, V51, P72, DOI 10.1016/j.ijnurstu.2013.01.010
93	2016	Phillips JP, 2016, NEW ENGL J MED, V374, P1661, DOI 10.1056/NEJMra1501998
54	2014	Speroni KG, 2014, J EMERG NURS, V40, P218, DOI 10.1016/j.jen.2013.05.014
50	2017	Choi SH, 2017, J NURS MANAGE, V25, P508, DOI 10.1111/jonm.12488
50	2018	Yang BX, 2018, ARCH PSYCHIAT NURS, V32, P31, DOI 10.1016/j.apnu.2017.09.013

### 3.4 The analysis of high-frequency keywords in the field of WPV

Keywords represent a high degree of summary and condensation of the topic of a piece of literature.

#### 3.4.1 List of the top 20 high-frequency co-occurring words in the field of emergency WPV

The keyword co-occurrence knowledge graph is generated by CiteSpace, in which nodes represent keywords, the size of nodes reflects the frequency of keywords, and the thickness of the connecting lines between nodes reflects the degree of connection between nodes (Mario Coccia & Secondo Rolfo, 2002). A total of 467 co-occurring keywords were obtained, and 86 keyword nodes with a co-occurrence frequency of greater than or equal to 20 were included in the graph, as illustrated in Figure 4. The top 20 keywords were analysed in terms of their frequency of occurrence and centrality, as illustrated in Table 2. Table 2 shows that the top five keywords in terms of centrality are "workplace violence", "nurses", "workplace", "aggression" and "impact".



through training. This represents a progressive shift in the management of workplace violence.

### 3.5 Research Trends in WPV

#### 3.5.1 Mapping the WPV domain of emergent words

The "Burst Detection" operation in CiteSpace was employed to identify keywords that emerged in a short period (Fig. 5). Emerging words are regarded as indicators of research frontiers, which emerge due to the emergence of new research trends and sudden changes in the direction of research over some time. Two key aspects of emergent terms can be identified: the intensity of emergence, which represents the intensity of the keyword emergence, and the duration, which includes the beginning and end of the keyword emergence time.

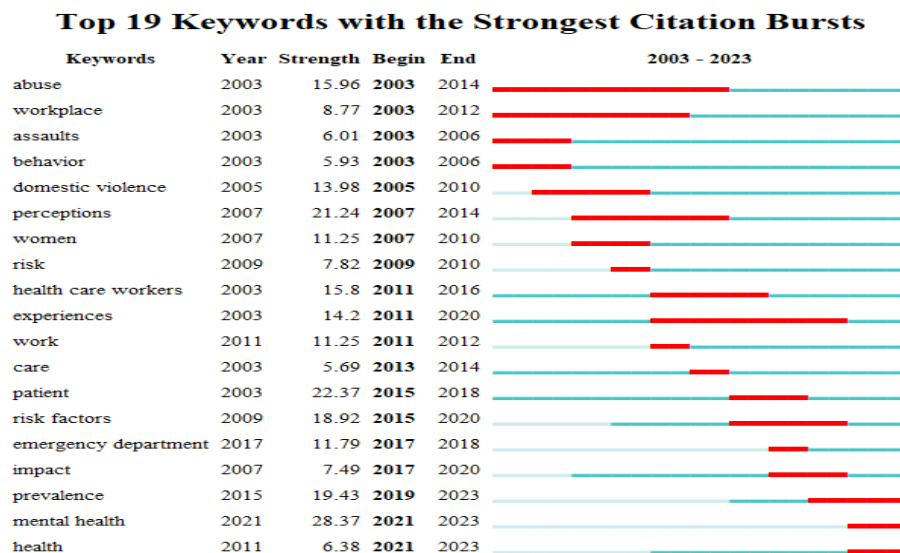


Fig. 5 Keywords with the Strongest Citation Bursts

#### 3.5.2. Specific trend analyses

A total of 19 keywords were identified as exhibiting the strongest mutation strengths. When combined with the chronological development order, these 19 keywords revealed the following research trends:

2003-2014, the relevant research is more concentrated, and the duration of the emergent word is longer. The term "workplace" is used in this context to refer to the environment in which employees work. The term "abuse" is used to describe any form of mistreatment or mistreatment of power. The term "behaviour" is used to describe the way in which individuals act or behave. The term "risk" is used to describe the probability of an adverse outcome. The term "women" is used to describe female employees. The high intensity of mutation indicates that this period of time was

dominated by the current investigation of the types of violence in the workplace and the proportion of violence occurring. The types of violence were mainly verbal violence.

2015-2020, The strongest mutation for "experience" suggests that the study is beginning to focus on nurses' experiences of workplace violence, with experiential interviews to understand the physical and psychological changes that occur when nurses are exposed to workplace violence. Furthermore, the term "risk factor" signifies that research on the primary factors that contribute to the incidence of violence in the workplace can effectively reduce the incidence of violence in the workplace by initiating prevention and control measures for these factors.

2021-2023, The emergent words "health" and "mental health" indicate that such events may have an impact on the health of staff, suggesting that the study was concerned with the health of nurses.

A comprehensive analysis of the retrieved relevant literature shows that the direction of WPV research is broadly divided into status quo research, influencing factors research and solution measures research. In different periods, with the development of WPV research and related studies in management and psychology, the entry points of research will be different, but this difference is not absolute.

## 4. 0 DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Analysis of the number of publications authors and countries

The results of this study indicate that research on workplace violence in nursing has demonstrated an increasing trend year on year. The majority of foreign researchers originate from the United States and several developed countries in Europe. The links between high-frequency keywords in the field of WPV are relatively fragmented, with a considerable number of research directions, a relatively small number of cross-studies, and a diverse range of research contents. Workplace violence is a pervasive issue in the healthcare sector, exerting a profound impact on the physical and mental well-being of nurses. To address this challenge, organizations must enhance collaboration to effectively tackle the issue of workplace violence in nursing. In terms of research on workplace violence, there is a preponderance of cross-sectional studies, with a relatively limited number of intervention studies.

### 4.2 Analysis of research hotspots and trend

4.2.1 Mental health Mental health is both a high-frequency keyword and a mutation that continues to this day. Nurses are exposed to a variety of occupational health risks, among which workplace violence is a major challenge related to the work of medical workers, and workplace violence has a great impact on the physical and mental health of medical workers. A study by M Cannavo et al., on predictors of workplace-related violence leading to healthcare-related illness, showed that 87% of emergency department healthcare workers experienced workplace violence by patients or their relatives(M. Cannavò, F. La Torre, C. Sestili, G. La Torre, & M. Fioravanti, 2019).



There is a wide range of ways in which WPV may affect employees' mental and physical health, as well as their relationships with coworkers and their level of productivity (M. Cannavò et al., 2019). It is possible that carer burnout, injuries, or stress brought on by dealing with aggressive patients might lead to an increase in the frequency of medical errors and a decline in patient outcomes (Y. C. Chang, M. C. Hsu, & W. C. Ouyang, 2022; P. Gray et al., 2019; W. Liu et al., 2018). The high turnover rate (27%) among new nurses during their first three years on the job has been connected to direct bullying practices, which account for one-third of the departures and most often come from nurse supervisors or staff nurses (H. E. Chang & S. H. Cho, 2023). These ramifications have the potential to imperil the capacity of health service providers to retain workers and to establish the type of cohesive nursing unit atmosphere that is required to serve patients with high-quality care (B. Kaddourah, A. K. Abu-Shaheen, & M. Al-Tannir, 2018). Additional effects of workplace violence include burnout, turnover intention, and job satisfaction, according to research published by Wenhui Liu, Shihong Zhao, and Other research team members (W. Liu et al., 2018). Some individuals go to work even when they are fighting off an illness or have a fever. It can be seen that the incidence of workplace violence suffered by nursing staff is high and harmful. Workplace violence not only harms the physical health of medical staff but also causes a series of psychological problems. Therefore, after suffering from workplace violence, how to improve the healthy psychological state of nurses and promote the health of the critical care workforce is an urgent and long-lasting problem researchers need to address.

#### 4.2.2 Influencing factors of workplace violence

The term "risk factors" is also a high-frequency term used in the field of workplace violence. The current research focus is on the analysis of the factors associated with WPV among nurses and the development of targeted interventions to reduce the incidence of WPV. To date, several studies have indicated that the factors influencing workplace violence are primarily related to individuals, environments, and organizations. Regarding the individual factors, those related to nurses are predominantly gender, age, and work experience. Conversely, the factors related to environments and organizations are mainly the high pressure of nursing work, irrational scheduling, and insufficient personnel (K. L. Edward, K. Ousey, P. Warelow, & S. Lui, 2014). A cross-sectional survey of workplace violence in primary hospitals in southeastern China identified gender, age, marital status, education level, technical position, and number of beds as independent risk factors for workplace violence (H. Zhu et al., 2022). A study conducted at a government hospital in Malaysia found that the prevalence of workplace violence (WPV) was higher among nurses in the  $\leq 30$  age group than among nurses in higher age groups (I. Halim et al., 2022). However, the current investigations of influencing factors are mainly cross-sectional, therefore, in future cross-sectional studies in this field, on the one hand, the sample size should be enlarged and the sampling method should be improved to reduce bias; on the other

hand, the research methodology could be a mixed study combining quantitative and qualitative research, with a focus on understanding the influence of nurses' professional qualities, hospital environmental factors, and patients' factors on the prevalence of WPV.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

In summary, workplace violence is an ongoing topic of clinical concern, with a high volume of publications but poor collaboration between authors and institutions, so it is recommended that healthcare organizations and medical schools strengthen their collaboration. From the research trend, the study of the mental health of nurses after suffering from workplace violence will be an ongoing hot research. At the same time, the way of intervention of WPV for victims, mainly nurses, should also be the focus of research in recent years. As a bibliometric study of WPV, the literature involved is from the Web of Science, which may not fully cover the field of WPV.

### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Not Applicable.

### Credit Authorship Contribution Statement

**Jing Sun:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Data curation, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing, Project administration. **Faridah Mohd Said :** Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing, Resources, Supervision. **Tan Beng Geok:** Conceptualization, Methodology, Validation, Formal analysis, Supervision.

### Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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