

# Prevalence and Factors Associated with Violence among Bank Workers in Bobo-Dioulasso

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Violence is a public health problem that affects all sectors of activity. Several factors may cause its occurrence among bank workers. **Objective:** The objective of the study was to determine the prevalence and factors associated with violence in the banking sector in Bobo-Dioulasso. **Methods:** This was a descriptive and analytical cross-sectional study that took place from 02/01/2024 to 20/12/2024 among workers of five banks in the city of Bobo-Dioulasso. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed with R software version 4.4.2. **Results:** A total of 170 workers were included in the study. The average age was  $37.84 \pm 8.29$  years. The sex ratio was 1.24. The average job tenure was  $6.38 \pm 5.91$  years and 104 (61.18%) worked more than 8 hours per day. Among the participants, 42 were victims of violence in the last 12 months, representing a prevalence of 24.71%, including 36 (21.18%) cases of exogenous violence. In multivariate analysis, a significant association was found between violence and on-call work. **Conclusion:** The prevalence of violence among bank workers in Bobo-Dioulasso is high. It is necessary to adopt a strategy to prevent this risk, particularly during on-call periods, in order to protect staff and increase productivity.

## Keywords

Violence, Prevalence, Factors, Banks, Bobo-Dioulasso

## 1. Introduction

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), workplace violence refers to any action, incident, or behavior that deviates from a reasonable attitude by which a person is attacked, threatened, harmed, or injured by the fact or on the occasion of his professional activities [1]. It is now a real public health problem that affects all sectors of activity. In 2003, 22.4% of employees were victims of violence in France [2]. In Latin America, expenses related to this occupational risk in 2018 represented 14.2% of the gross domestic product [3]. Workers in contact with the public are particularly exposed, notably in the fields of health, education and banking, where studies reveal high prevalence of the risk, which can reach 62.1% [4]-[6]. Isolated work, handling valuables such as banknotes and work organization are all professional factors that cause workplace violence [7]. Beyond the physical injuries to which victims are exposed, workplace violence can cause psychological disorders, but also negatively impact productivity and the company's image [8]-[11]. Psychological and sexual violence increase the risk of depression among victims [12].

In Burkina Faso, little data is available on the extent of violence and the factors associated with its occurrence among workers in the banking sector. A study carried out in a bank in 2020 by Sanon/Lompo *et al.* revealed that 55.83% of workers were victims of verbal violence [13]. However, other forms of violence were not taken into account in this study, nor was the search for possible etiological factors associated with its occurrence among staff. This is what motivated the conduct of this study, which aims to determine the prevalence and factors associated with violence among bank workers in Bobo-Dioulasso.

## 2. Method

This was a descriptive and analytical cross-sectional study conducted from January 2, 2024 to December 20, 2024 among workers at five banks in the city of Bobo-Dioulasso. Data were collected using a questionnaire. An exhaustive sampling was used. Qualitative variables were described using gross numbers and proportions. Quantitative variables were described using the mean and standard deviation. Factors associated with violence were investigated using logistic regression. Workplace violence was the dependent variable, and the socio-professional characteristics of workers were the independent variables. All variables associated with violence with a p-value < 20% in the univariate analysis were included in the multivariate model. Statistical analyses were performed using R software version 4.4.2, and the significance threshold used for all statistical tests was 5%.

### 2.1. Ethical Considerations

We obtained authorization from bank managers before conducting the study. Participation in the study was conditional upon the agents' consent to participate. Respondent anonymity and confidentiality of results were respected throughout the study.

## 2.2. Operational Definitions

- Internal workplace violence is that which occurs between workers, including management staff.
- External workplace violence is that which is expressed between workers (and management staff) and any other person present in the workplace [1].
- Physical violence refers to violent acts directed against property and physical assaults (shoving, blows, injuries).
- Psychological violence encompasses incivility (lack of respect expressed in words and behavior), verbal aggression (threats, insults), harassment (actions aimed at relentlessly subjecting someone to repeated attacks and incessant assaults), and intimidation [14].
- Sexual violence is defined as any sexual act, any attempted sexual act, any comment or advance of a sexual nature directed against a person without their consent.

## 3. Results

### 3.1. Socio-Professional Characteristics of Workers

The 5 banks had a total of 170 agents who all participated in the study, representing a participation rate of 100%. The mean age was  $37.84 \pm 8.29$  years, with a range of 21 to 59 years. The sex ratio was 1.24. The mean job tenure was  $6.38 \pm 5.91$  years, with a range of 1 to 34 years. The majority of participants, 104 (61.18%), worked more than 8 hours per day. The socio-professional characteristics of the participants are presented in **Table 1**.

**Table 1.** Socio-professional characteristics of workers.

	Number	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	76	44.71
Female	94	55.29
<b>Age (years)</b>		
<40	95	55.88
≥40	75	44.12
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	66	38.82
Cohabitation	8	4.71
Divorced	3	1.76
Married	90	52.94
Widow(er)	3	1.76
<b>Workstation</b>		
Bank officer	162	95.29
Other agents	8	4.71

Continued

<b>Seniority in the workstation (years)</b>		
<10	131	77.06
≥10	39	22.94
<b>Work duration/day</b>		
≤8 hours	66	38.82
>8 hours	104	61.18
<b>On-call work</b>		
Yes	85	50.00
No	85	50.00

## 3.2. Characteristics of Violence

### 3.2.1. Origin, Location, Type, Time, Perpetrator, and Circumstances of the Violence

During the study, 42 employees were victims of violence in the past 12 months, representing a prevalence of 24.71%. Cases of external violence were the most common, with 36 (85.72%). The majority of victims, 41 (97.62%), experienced psychological violence. The origin, location, type, time, perpetrator, and circumstances of the violence experienced by the employees are presented in **Table 2**.

**Table 2.** Origin, location, type, time, perpetrator, and circumstances of the violence.

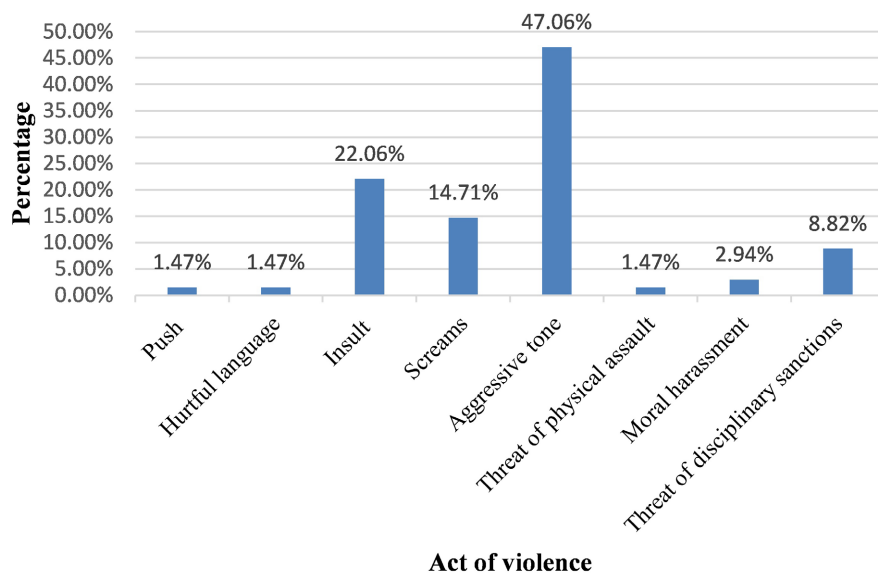
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Origin of the violence</b>		
Internal	4	9.52
External	36	85.72
Internal and external	2	4.76
<b>Location of occurrence of the violence</b>		
Inside the bank	41	97.62
Outside the bank	1	2.38
<b>Typology of violence</b>		
Physique	1	2.38
Psychologique	41	97.62
Sexuelle	0	0
<b>Hour of occurrence of the violence</b>		
Before 12 h 30	27	64.29
12 h 30 to 16 h	6	14.29
After 16 h	5	14.29
At any time	4	4.76

Continued

Author of violence		
Client	28	66.66
Colleague	6	14.29
Hierarchical superior	6	14.29
Client et and hierarchical superior	2	4.76
Circumstance of occurrence		
Internet connection problem	18	30.51
Client impatience	28	47.46
Lack of communication	7	11.87
Mental illness of the aggressor	3	5.08
Dispute between clients	3	5.08
Consequence of violence		
Fear	6	12%
Disappointment	12	24%
Demotivation	18	36%
Wants to stop the work	6	12%
Anger	2	4%
Temporary work stoppage	2	4%
None	4	8%

### 3.2.2. Acts of Violence

Acts of violence were dominated by aggressive tones observed among 32 victims (47.06%) and insults reported among 15 workers (22.06%). The acts of violence recorded among the victims are presented in **Figure 1**.



**Figure 1.** Acts of violence.

### 3.2.3. Reporting as Work-Related Accidents

Of the cases of violence reported in the study, 41 cases (97.62%) were not reported as work-related accidents. The reasons given were ignorance on the part of the victims, who were notified in 29 cases (69.05%) and ignorance on the part of the supervisor, who was recorded in one case (2.38%). For 12 victims (28.57%), reporting was not necessary.

## 3.3. Factors Associated with Violence

### 3.3.1. Univariate Analysis

In the univariate analysis, on-call work was associated with the occurrence of violence among bank employees. The results of the univariate analysis are presented in **Table 3**.

**Table 3.** Univariate analysis.

	Violence n (%)		p
	Yes	No	
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	20 (47.62)	56 (43.75)	0.66
Female	22 (52.38)	72 (56.25)	
<b>Age (years)</b>			
<40	25 (59.52)	70 (54.69)	0.58
≥40	17 (40.48)	58 (45.31)	
<b>Seniority in the workstation (years)</b>			
<10	36 (85.71)	95 (74.22)	0.13
≥10	6 (14.29)	33 (25.72)	
<b>On-call work</b>			
Yes	27 (64.29)	58 (45.31)	<b>0.035</b>
No	15 (35.71)	70 (54.69)	
<b>Workstation</b>			
Bank officer	40 (95.24)	122 (95.31)	0.98
Other agents	2 (4.76)	6 (4.69)	

### 3.3.2. Multivariate Analysis

Multivariate analysis revealed a significant association between violence and on-call work. Employees subjected to on-call work were approximately twice as likely to experience workplace violence. However, gender, age, position, and job tenure were not associated with the occurrence of violence in the study. The results of the multivariate analysis are presented in **Table 4**.

**Table 4.** Multivariate analysis.

	Violence	OR (IC 95%)	p
<b>On-call work</b>			
No	15	1	<b>0.039</b>
Yes	27	2.15 (1.05; 4.52)	
<b>Seniority in the workstation (years)</b>			
<10	40	1	0.15
≥10	2	0.49 (0.17; 1.21)	

OR: Odds ratio.

## 4. Discussion

### 4.1. Limitations of the Study

The study aimed to determine the prevalence and factors associated with violence among bank workers in Bobo-Dioulasso. A total of 170 workers participated. The average age was  $37.84 \pm 8.29$  years and the average job tenure was  $6.38 \pm 5.91$  years. Daily working hours exceeded 8 hours for 104 workers (61.18%), and half of the staff were on-call. However, the study may have some limitations.

- Method bias: We conducted a cross-sectional study which does not allow us to track the evolution of violence over time among workers

- Information bias: We looked for instances of violence over the past 12 months. This relies on memory, and there may be information bias due to forgetfulness.

Despite these limitations, our results constitute a database that allows us to understand the problem of violence in the banking sector.

### 4.2. Prevalence of Violence

The prevalence of violence over the past 12 months was 24.71%. Thirty-six cases (85.72%) involved external violence caused by bank clients. For two victims (4.76%), the violence was perpetrated by both a client and a superior. The majority of victims, 41 (97.62%), experienced psychological violence. A similar prevalence of violence of 24.03% was observed in the study by Sanon/Lompo *et al.* among staff of primary and secondary schools in the country [5]. However, these authors recorded a predominance of physical violence observed in 50% of victims unlike our study where psychological violence represented 97.62% of cases. The presence of armed security agents could dissuade the aggressors in our study which explains the low proportion of physical violence. The presence of surveillance cameras in the banks that were the subject of the study could also explain the low prevalence of cases of physical violence suffered by the participants. Other authors recorded higher prevalences of violence among workers. In a study conducted by Sanon/Lompo *et al.* in Ouagadougou, 55.83% of bank staff were victims of verbal violence during their professional activity [13]. No cases of physical violence were recorded in this study, unlike our results. In Italy, Maran *et al.* noted 26.2% of cases of verbal ag-

gression among bank workers [6]. These authors also did not record any cases of physical violence. However, similar to our results, no cases of sexual violence were recorded in these studies. Akadje *et al.* noted 60% of cases of aggression among mobile money transfer point operators in Abidjan [15]. A high prevalence of violence was also observed by Abdellah *et al.* in an emergency care department in Egypt, at 59.7%, with a predominance of psychological violence, as in our observations [16]. However, these authors reported a higher proportion of cases of physical violence compared to our study, either 15.7%. In our study, people and property in banking establishments are protected by armed security guards, which could reduce the cases of violence suffered by participants. The prevention of this violence, whatever its typology, remains important in our banks, because cases of verbal violence could generate physical aggression causing physical or even psychological injuries. Also, the consequences of violence reported by victims, including demotivation (36%), disappointment (24%), and the desire to stop working (12%), merit that actions be taken to protect workers and increase returns in banks. These actions could be directed towards improving the quality of internet connection to facilitate banking operations, training staff in communication and recruiting counter staff to reduce customer waiting times. Employers and bank staff should be informed about the importance of reporting these cases as work accidents.

### 4.3. Factors Associated with Violence

In multivariate analysis, violence was associated with on-call work, which contributed to an approximately twofold increase in the risk of its occurrence among bank employees. However, the study did not reveal any association between violence and gender, age, position, or years of service. Maran *et al.* observed a significant association between violence among bank employees in Italy and age [6]. Indeed, workers aged 40 to 49 were more exposed to the risk of violence, while the age group of 50 to 59 was a protective factor regarding the occurrence of this risk. In Cameroon, Owona Manga *et al.* also noted age as a factor associated with violence among health workers in Yaoundé, with the age group of 30 to 40 years being a protective factor (OR = 0.40,  $p = 0.048$ ) [17]. Milon *et al.* noted in 2022 that among female employees in the banking sector in Bangladesh, there was a significant association between workplace harassment and professional failure [18]. In their study among workers in Türkiye, Aytac *et al.* noted a significant association between violence and gender as well as professional seniority [19]. Thus, women and workers with longer professional experience were more exposed to the risk of violence compared to other employees [19]. Preventing workplace violence requires analyzing etiological factors. In the banks we studied, employers should make efforts to better organize on-call periods. This requires increasing the number of employees during these on-call periods, as well as improving internet connectivity and good communication among staff. Raising awareness among bank customers is also necessary to prioritize the use of these prem-

ises during working days and hours, with on-call periods being reserved for emergency situations.

## 5. Conclusion

The prevalence of violence is high among bank employees in Bobo-Dioulasso. Internet connection problems and customer impatience were the main circumstances that contributed to its emergence. Multivariate analysis revealed on-call work as a factor associated with its occurrence among these employees. Preventing this risk in these banking institutions requires improving work organization, particularly during on-call periods.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest related to this work.

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