Challenges of the Latino Workforce

December 07, 2016
11:00 am-12:00 noon

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The 2014 total of 4,821 fatal work injuries was 5 percent higher than the count of 4,585 fatal work injuries reported for 2013. The count for 2014 was the highest since 2008.

Data for all years are revised and final.
Note: Data from 2001 exclude fatal work injuries resulting from the September 11 terrorist attacks.
The total for fatal work injuries involving Hispanic or Latino workers decreased in 2014. Around two-thirds of fatally-injured Hispanic or Latino workers in 2014 were born outside of the United States.
Fatal injuries involving foreign-born workers by country or region of birth, 2014

Workers born in Mexico accounted for the largest portion (40 percent) of foreign-born workers who died from work-related injuries in the United States in 2014.

Data for all years are revised and final.
Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.
Occupational Health Disparities

The term *occupational health disparities* refers to increased rates of work-related illness and injuries in particularly vulnerable populations [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2011].

Vulnerable populations are often described using a single characteristic (age, race, income, employment, etc.) [Cutter et al. 2005].

A growing body of research explores how a particular characteristic, such as being an immigrant, a racial minority, or a temporary worker, can increase an individual’s risk for occupational injury or illness and suggests effective ways to improve their safety and health.

However, as occupational health disparities research demonstrates, workers frequently belong to more than one of these vulnerable groups that affect their overall risk of injury or fatality [Krieger 2010].

Young Hispanic immigrant workers are never singularly Hispanic one day, immigrants the next day, and young persons the following day; they are all of these every day.
The concept of examining multiple occupational risk factors in this context is not new.


- Rate of fatal occupational injuries for foreign-born workers of all ages was 4.0, versus 3.7 for all workers.

- Rates for young foreign-born workers were even higher, particularly for the youngest workers (4.8 for those aged 20–24 years and 6.1 for those aged 15–19 years).

However, OSH professionals and programs can immediately begin to work on finding ways to effectively assist workers who are in overlapping vulnerable populations.
Hispanic Immigrant Workers in Construction

In 2013, Hispanic immigrants accounted for approximately 21.3\% (2,123,606) of the construction workforce (9,935,000) in the United States and 75\% of all Hispanics (2,831,475) working in this industry were immigrants [U.S. Census Bureau 2014b].

The number of cases of nonfatal injury or illness among Hispanic construction workers nearly doubled (from 17,715 to 33,930) from 1992 to 2006 [Dong et al. 2010].

Hispanic or Latino workers accounted for 12 percent of the injuries and illnesses in 2014. That is almost 53,350.
There are several challenges that our Latino workforce must face. These challenges include some like:

- Language as a barrier to safety
- Working in an industry in which they did not work previously
- Those who worked in the same industry often find different materials and procedures in the U.S
- Worker’s culture as a barrier to safety
- Structural realities such as immigration laws, policies and practices, discrimination, growing reliance on temporary workers.
Language as a barrier to safety
Language differences among immigrant workers, their supervisors, and coworkers are one of the most frequently cited barriers to safety.

Many immigrants are unfamiliar with the risks they face on the job, standard safety procedures in the United States, and the regulatory infrastructure that protects their right to a safe workplace [Flynn 2014].

Hispanic Worker’s culture explain their behaviors by placing a high value on being perceived as hard workers by their employer. This cultural value increased their likelihood of taking risks, such as working too fast.
From 2003 to 2008, the occupation groups with the highest fatality rate for Hispanic construction workers were ironworkers (135 deaths per 100,000 FTEs), roofers (28 deaths per 100,000 FTEs), and laborers (22 deaths per 100,000 FTEs).

FTEs = full-time equivalent workers
Organizations Working with and for The Latino Workforce.

- ASSE
- The Safety Professionals & the Latino Workforce (SPALW)
- OSHA
- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) provide national and world leadership to prevent workplace illnesses and injuries.
- The Center for Construction Research and Training (CPWR)
- The electronic Library of Construction Occupational Safety and Health (eLCOSH)
Organizations Working with and for The Latino Workforce.

- **ASSE** – Latino Safety Professionals participating in the translation of ANSI/AIHA/ASSE Z10-2012 and so many other safety articles.

- **The Safety Professionals & the Latino Workforce (SPALW)** common interest group addresses the increase in incidents among the Latino workforce due to misunderstanding of cultural gaps, communication barriers and inappropriate safety training. SPLAW provides one-on-one support through mentoring in both English and Spanish and embraces our nation's richness and ethnic diversity and to address issues of safety and cultural diversity, language, customs and traditions among different ethnic groups.
For ASSE Members:
Login into your ASSE profile to Add desired practice specialties, branches and/or common interest groups with your shopping cart and check out.

For Non-Members:
Join ASSE and your desired practice specialties, branches and/or common interest groups at the same time.

TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS
In his January 2016 President's Message, 2015-16 ASSE President Michael Belcher, CSP, reminds the OSH community that as the Latino workforce in the U.S. continues to grow so, too, do concerns about the higher numbers of injuries and illnesses these workers suffer. ASSE has initiated several initiatives to tackle this problem, including its joint report with NIOSH, "Overlapping Vulnerabilities: The Occupational Safety and Health of Young Immigrant Workers in Small Construction Firms."

As Belcher explains, these overlapping vulnerabilities are "threatening a generation of young immigrants who have come to the U.S. for a better quality of life. This should be a wake-up call for our profession." Download and read the report.[6] To gain insight on the efforts needed to address and reduce the OSH dangers experienced by vulnerable workers.

SeminarFest 2016 Preview: Proactive Steps Help Prevent Workplace Violence
12083015
Carol Redickson knows only too well that her phone will start ringing when a tragic workplace shooting takes place. (read more)

EDUCATION
Upcoming Events

ASB Workshop
Event Dates: Jan 18-20, 2016
Location: Des Plaines, IL

CSP Workshop
Event Dates: Jan 21-23, 2016
Location: Des Plaines, IL

Math Review Workshop
Event Dates: Jan 17, 2016
Location: Des Plaines, IL

Virtual Classroom
Process Safety Management of Highly Hazardous Chemicals - A Discussion on OSHA's PSM Standard January 13, 2016 - 11 am Central
A New View on Safety Incentives January 21-22, 2016 - 9 am Central
The Psychology of Error February 3, 2016 11 am Central
Forensic Liability in the Workplace February 10, 2016 11 am Central

BENEFITS WHEN YOU JOIN
Read the Best – Our top ranked member benefit, Professional Safety
Enhance Your Skills – Explore discounted educational opportunities
Connect with Peers - Reach out to 37,000 fellow professional with ASSE social sites
Access members only resources - Such as: free webinars & Body of Knowledge
Organizations Working with and for The Latino Workforce.

- **OSHA** held a National Action Summit for Latino Worker Health & Safety in Houston, Texas on April 14-15, 2010. It continues promoting different initiatives that address the cultural gap with the “Latinos.”

- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (**NIOSH**) provide national and world leadership to prevent workplace illnesses and injuries.
CPWR – the Center for Construction Research and Training has many H&S resources for Latino construction workers

http://www.cpwr.com
The electronic Library of Construction Occupational Safety and Health (eLCOSH) has a Spanish section
How to effectively intervene when a safety concern/issue involve Latino workers?

- Make it personal. Latinos have a strong sense of protection when it comes to their families.

- Speak their same language. Doesn’t mean only Spanish.

- Identify safety conscious Latino workers and coach them, so they could assist you when it comes to deal with Latino workers and safety concerns.
What can I/You do?

- Get involved
- Get Informed
- Ask for Assistance

Question?

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References:

1. **Overlapping Vulnerabilities**: The Occupational Health and Safety of Young Immigrant Workers in Small Construction Firms. NIOSH and ASSE Report • May 2015
