Nail Salon Makeover: Health, Safety, and Wellness in Vietnamese Nail Technicians

Hannah White1,2, Dede Montgomery1,2, Holden Leung2, Christine Lau3, Khalid Khan4, Diane Rohlman1,2
1Center for Research on Occupational and Environmental Toxicology, Oregon Health and Science University, Portland, OR 2 Department of Psychology, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 3 Asian Health and Service Center, Portland, OR

Introduction

Vietnamese nail salon workers face a unique set of challenges. Despite the growing popularity of nail salons, there is limited research about the health and wellness of Vietnamese nail salon workers. This study aimed to develop culturally appropriate health and safety materials for Vietnamese nail salon workers in Portland.

Methods

The survey was conducted by the Oregon National Health Equity Network and was administered by Vietnamese speaking AHS staff. The survey was designed for Vietnamese nail salon workers in Portland. The survey included questions about demographics, concerns and interests, and workplace practices.

Survey Administration

The survey was administered in person or online. The survey was translated into Vietnamese and back-translated to ensure accuracy.

Development of Materials

A desk calendar was developed with general safety and health tips. The calendar was distributed to nail salon workers.

Goals

1. Build a relationship with Asian Health and Service Center (AHS) to conduct community-based participatory research.
2. Administer a survey to learn more about the health concerns, practices and knowledge of the Vietnamese nail salon workers.
3. Utilize survey information to develop and evaluate culturally appropriate health and safety materials.

Results

- The majority (92%) of nail salon workers were interested in learning about a safer and healthier workplace. Brochures (57%) and the internet (43%) were the most common ways workers accessed safety information.
- The survey identified demographic characteristics and concerns of the local nail salon workers. We also learned about the positive impact of community partnerships.
- The survey also highlighted the importance of awareness and education about the chemicals used in nail salons.

Workplace Environment

Ventilation: Adequate ventilation is an important factor to reduce exposure in nail salon workers. The most common forms of ventilation reported were a window (49%), a door (43%), and a shop ventilation system (41%).

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):

When performing a manicure, nail workers often handle harsh chemicals. The most common forms of PPE reported were gloves (90%), aprons (36%), and masks (23%).

Disseminating Information

The majority (75%) of nail salon workers surveyed received information about nail safety through brochures. The most common sources of information were brochures (90%) and the internet (43%).

Discussion

This study builds on a strong relationship between Asian Health and Service Center and Vietnamese nail salon workers. The survey highlighted the importance of culturally appropriate materials and interventions for Vietnamese nail salon workers.

Next Steps

The project aims to develop and disseminate culturally appropriate health and safety materials for Vietnamese nail salon workers. The project will also conduct workshops and trainings.

References