

Analysis of Ethnic Disparities in Workers' Compensation Claims Using Data Linkage

Illinois Center for Injury Prevention

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Key Points

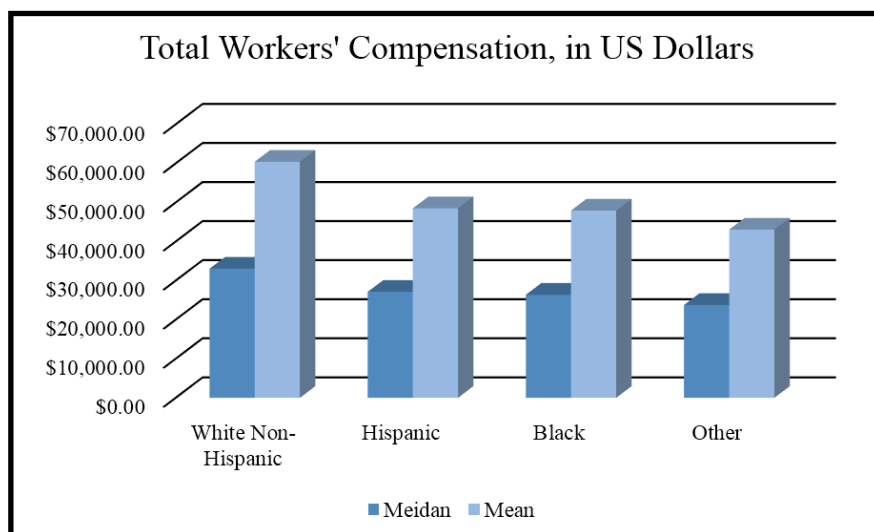
Background

The construction industry has continuously been one of the most hazardous industries in the United States. Each year several hundred thousand construction workers become ill or are injured as a result of on-the-job hazards. The workforce is made up of many low-skilled, low-educated and immigrant populations that are vulnerable to workplace injury. The overall goal of this research project was to assess ethnic disparities in monetary compensation - which comprises medical cost, low wages, dependent benefits, survivor benefits, settlement payments, attorney fees and other miscellaneous costs - among construction workers injured on the job through the linkage of medical records and workers' compensation data.

Using data from the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission (IWCC), Illinois Trauma Registry (ITR) and Illinois Hospital Discharge databases for 2000-2005, a total of 1039 cases were obtained.

Findings

Compensation was \$5824 higher for white non-Hispanic workers for other ethnic groups when controlling for injury severity, affected body region, type of injury, average weekly wage, weeks of temporary total disability, percent permanent partial disability, death or attorney use.



What does it mean?

The findings indicate that white non-Hispanic construction workers are awarded higher monetary settlements despite the observation that for specific injuries the mean temporary total disability and permanent partial disability were equivalent to or lower than those in Hispanic and black construction workers.

Authors

Lee S. Friedman, PhD^{1,2}

Peter Ruestow, MSc¹

Linda Forst, MD, MPH¹

Affiliations

1 University of Illinois
Chicago, School of Public
Health, Division of
Environmental and
Occupational Health
Sciences

2 The Social Policy
Research Institute