

# **Psychosocial work environment and depressive symptoms among U.S. workers: Comparing working poor and working non-poor.**

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## **Abstract**

The psychosocial work environment has been associated with mental health outcomes; however, little research has examined this relationship for low-wage workers. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between psychosocial job characteristics and depressive symptoms for US workers using an expanded model of job quality. Data were from the 2002 National Study of the Changing Workforce, a nationally representative study of wage and salaried workers in the US. Working poor was defined as households earning <250% of the federal poverty threshold. Multivariate logistic regression models show for working poor employees, job insecurity was the single significant correlate of depressive symptoms after controlling for other demographic and work environment variables. For working non-poor employees, high psychological demands and low supervisor and coworker support were associated with depressive symptoms. Findings suggest all jobs do not equally affect employees' depressive symptoms. Implications for research that may improve the mental health of the working poor in the US are presented.

Keywords: *work environment, depression, job descriptions, working poor, working class*