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Occupational health hazards: an alarming issue of vindhyan region madhya pradesh india

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ABSTRACT

Background- Occupational health hazards are the major problem in Indian labourers and industrial worker population which has been always overlooked due to lack of education, poverty, administrative indifference and apathy. And if not checked and whistled as early as possible it will increase by alarming rate. In this pursuit we have surveyed labourers and industrial workers of Vindhyan region for calculating the risk factors and how often they are open to occupational health hazards. We also tried to find out whether they are under medical supervision, kinds and types of Vindhyan region occupational hazards and their awareness about these diseases, their causes, precaution and cure.

Design & settings- we have surveyed 100 labourers and industrial workers of Vindhyan region who are involved in construction of murrum giiti road (kaccha road), making of pakka road (damrikan), infrastructure development, mines, stone crushers, cement industries, fire cracker manufacturing units

Result- Ninety % of the subject population does not aware about the occupational health hazards where as 40 % of the subject population is suffering from diseases of occupational health hazards being unaware of it. Thirty percent of subject population were suffering from lung diseases and breathing troubles while 10 % of subjects were suffering from skin allergies. None of the labourers and industrial workers was suffering from metabolic syndrome such as hypertension, heart diseases, bowel disorder, diabetes and urinary trouble. In subject population 68 % persons have been found anaemic. Thirty % of subject population is found to be not able to arrange a balanced diet hence suffering from deficiency diseases. Ten % of subject population is found below average weight than normal BMI.

Conclusion- There is no knowledge and information available to workers for occupational health hazard because of this unawareness and its measurement disregard major health problem is generating which leads to low life expectancy of workers. © 2015 Trade Science Inc. - INDIA

KEYWORDS

Occupational;
Health;
Hazards;
Vindhya.

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INTRODUCTION

Occupational health hazard is a very serious issue to be believed viewed and should be combat as a major problem which has always been ignored and disregarded. At large it has been seen that these health hazards is due to working in specific conditions generated naturally or provided artificially for industrial production. As defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) "occupational health deals with all aspects of health and safety in the workplace and has a strong focus on primary prevention of hazards".¹ Contractors, small industrial units, private firms take maximum utilization of their workers but do not take care of their health illness, produced due to specific working conditions at which they are bounded to work in stake of their health. These small pvt. firms, contractors do not take responsibility of their workers health. Occupational safety and health can be important for moral, legal, and financial reasons. In common-law jurisdictions, employers have a common law duty to take reasonable care for the safety of their employees.² Good occupational safety and health practices can also reduce employee injury and illness related costs, including medical care, sick leave and disability benefit costs. Generally occupational health hazards are seen in Vindhya by heavily dusted and densely polluted working sites for example construction of murrum giiti road (kaccha road), making of pakka road (damrikaran), infrastructure development, mines, stone crushers, cement industries, fire cracker manufacturing units etc. These hazards include lung diseases, breathing problem, cough cold and catarrh, skin diseases, hepatotoxicity etc. To catch the pace of blind development race going through out in the developing nations, this Vindhayan region is trying hard to cope up and hence huge infrastructure development, heavy mineral exploration works large stone crushers units are processing and works are being carried out in unplanned and non scientific manner which leads to occupational health hazards to workers. These workers are never screened for illness nor tested physically to be fit to work in these critical specific conditions. Although work provides

many economic and other benefits, a wide array of workplace hazards also present risks to the health and safety of people at work. These include but are not limited to, "chemicals, biological agents, physical factors, adverse ergonomic conditions, allergens, a complex network of safety risks," and a broad range of psychosocial risk factors.³ This development is unconcerned about healthy safety measurement and all essential norms and guidelines are disregarded for certain monetary benefits which lead to critical conditions of labourers and industrial workers due to occupational health hazards. Their wages are only hand to mouth; they are not able to save anything in case if treatment needed. Therefore contractors, private firms, industrial houses should take responsibility of their workers health and there should must be provision of their health insurance. Occupational health is a multidisciplinary field of healthcare concerned with enabling an individual to undertake their occupation, in the way that causes least harm to their health. Health has been defined as it contrasts, for example, with the promotion of health and safety at work, which is concerned with preventing harm from any incidental hazards, arising in the workplace.⁴ None of the occupational health issues were studied in Vindhyan geographical region in state of Madhya Pradesh, India. So our aim was to track the common issues of occupational health & their management in defind region.

MATERIALAND METHODS

How important is to rescue labourers and industrial workers from occupational health hazards, we have surveyed 100 labourers and industrial workers of Vindhyan region who are involved in construction of murrum giiti road (kaccha road), making of pakka road (damrikaran), infrastructure development, mines, stone crushers, cement industries, fire cracker manufacturing units etc. This survey was performed by researchers of Awadhes Pratap Singh University, Rewa (M.P.) India and carried out through questionnaire (attached separately) asked from workers and labourers.

RESULT & DISCUSSION

All 100 labourers and workers have been asked the same questionnaire to know about the problem of occupational health hazards. Ninety % of the subject population does not aware about the occupational health hazards where as 40 % of the subject population is suffering from diseases of occupational health hazards being unaware of it. Neither of the 100 subject population knows that those who are being ill after employed is due to their work nor any of the employer has taken any step to make them aware that at least their labourers and industrial workers should know about occupational health hazards risk. In case of severe illness no one is provided with extra money for treatment only daily wages is provided to them. And they are also not covered under medical insurance. When all labourers and industrial workers are informed about the benefits of medical health insurance they all are agreed and have similar opinion that medical health insurance should be provided by employer to them. All labourers and industrial workers have shown concern that employer should follow all necessary safety measurement provisions but none of the employer strictly follow safety rules and regulation guidelines. Labourers and industrial workers are not aware about Silicosis and Asbestosis. Thirty percent of subject population were suffering from lung diseases and breathing troubles while 10 % of subjects were suffering from skin allergies. None of the labourers and industrial workers was suffering from

metabolic syndrome such as hypertension, heart diseases, bowel disorder, diabetes and urinary trouble. In subject population 68 % persons have been found anaemic. Thirty % of subject population is found to be not able to arrange a balanced diet hence suffering from deficiency diseases. Ten % of subject population is found below average weight than normal BMI. All labourers and industrial workers have agreed that they are not able to give a proper balanced diet and healthy brought up to their children and family member nor in this regard their employer and administration is concerned. Physical hazards are a common source of injuries in many industries.⁵ They are perhaps unavoidable in certain industries, such as construction and mining, but over time people have developed safety methods and procedures to manage the risks of physical danger in the workplace. Employment of children may pose special problems.⁶ Occupational health hazard is a major problem in Indian industrial population which needs strong attention by all streams of society, taken care under corporate social responsibility & govt. administrative concern. Vindhyan region is developing region so all kind of infrastructural development work is in progress along with existing and cement and other industries. In these work various labourers are workers are needed and required. Employer and owner of forms for maximum profit and minimum loss take maximum work from these workers and provide the lowest wages applicable, and also not provide any kind of information regarding occupational health hazard. They also not provide health

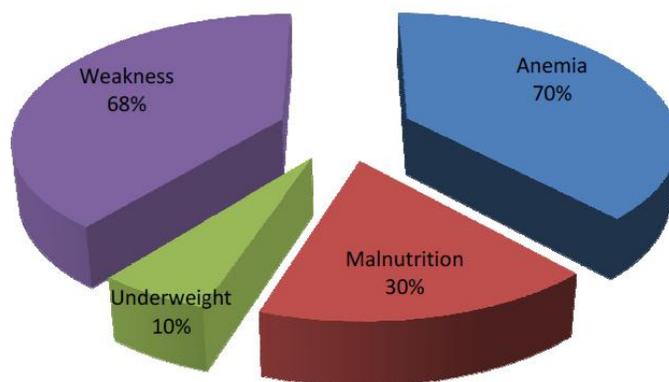
Common health issues of labours

Figure 1 : Common health issues of Vindhyan labours

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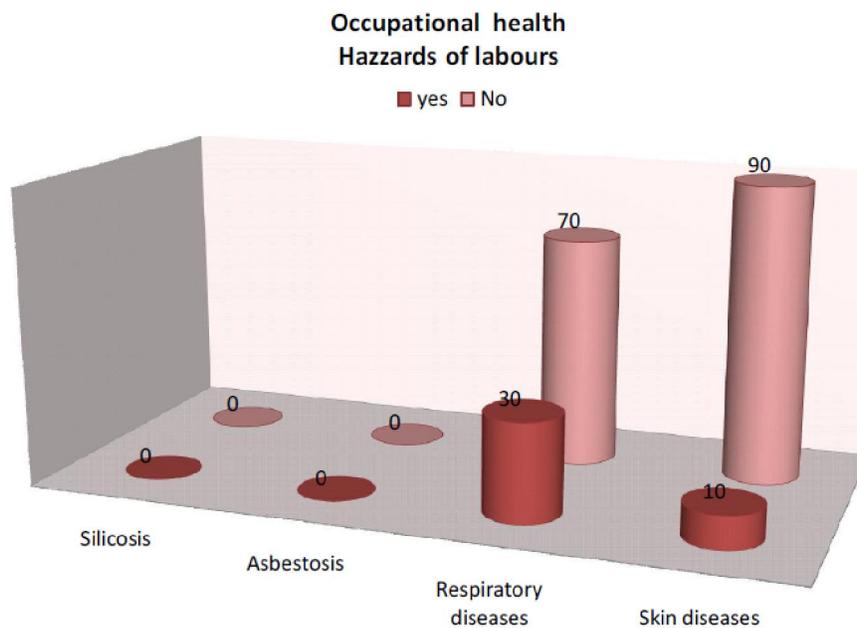


Figure 2 : Occupational health hazards of Vindhyan population

Awareness Vs Requirement

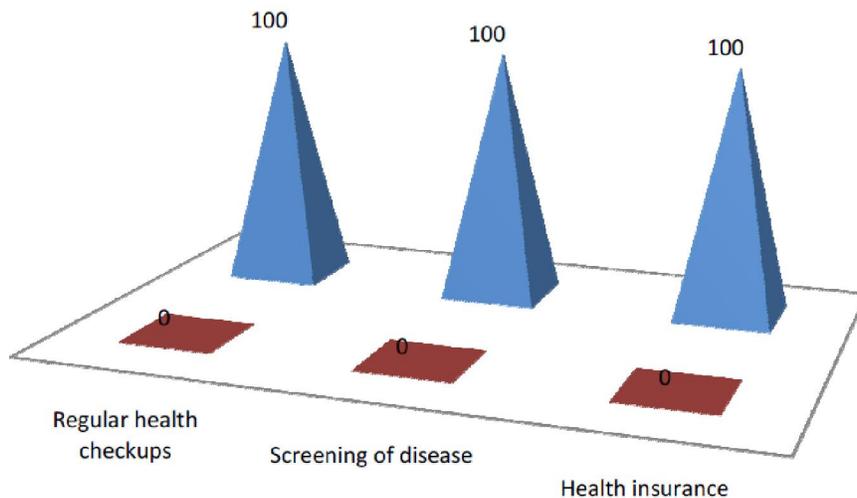


Figure 3 : Comprative representation of awareness and requirement of Vindhyan labours

insurance to their workers. Workplace bullying and harassment is a health and safety issue that can compromise the mental and physical health and safety of workers. Employers must recognize these hazards, put prevention measures in place, and address incidents if they occur.⁷ Our constitution provides a broad framework under which policies and programmes for occupational health and safety can be established. Legislation on occupational health and safety has existed in India for over 50 years.

The principal health and safety laws are based on the British Factories Act. The Factories (Amendment) Act came into force on December 1, 1987. A special chapter on occupational health and safety to safeguard workers employed in hazardous industries was added. In this chapter, pre-employment and periodic medical examinations and monitoring of the work environment are mandatory for industries defined as hazardous under the Act. A maximum permissible limit has been laid down for a number of chemicals. There are also two key laws

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covering worker compensation and welfare. One is Workmen's Compensation Law, by which a worker can claim compensation under establishments covered by the Factories Act. Another is Employees State Insurance Act (ESI Act), which is a contributory social insurance scheme that protects the interests of workers in contingencies such as sickness, maternity, employment injury causing temporary or permanent physical disability or death, loss of wages or loss of earning capacity. As of March 2006, there were 35.4 million beneficiaries under this scheme.⁸ Government administrative concern should focus to follow strict safety measurement which is not pursued yet. In this area still illiteracy, scarcity of food and exploitation of workers exists. These workers are over worked and less paid. Those who are medically unfit are still working in these conditions to earn their living.

CONCLUSION

Due to huge infrastructural development in Vindhyan region; one hand a lot of employment is generated on the other hand there is no knowledge and information available to workers for occupational health hazard because of this unawareness and its measurement disregard major health problem is generating which leads to low life expectancy of workers. In this regard to conquer this problem of occupational health hazard government agencies, NGO and corporate houses should work together.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Are you aware of occupational health hazard?
2. Which of the diseases are you already suffering?
3. Which of the diseases do you think is caused because of your occupation?
4. Are you informed about occupational health hazards by your employer?
5. Are you provided with monetary help by your employer in case of health illness?
6. Do you think that your employer should take responsibility for workers health insurance?
7. Have you been provided and informed with health safety measurement by your employer?
8. Are you suffering from any of the following diseases?
9. Silicosis b) Asbestosis c) skin allergy d) lung diseases e) breathing trouble.
10. Are you suffering from any of the following diseases?
11. Hypertension b) heart diseases c) stomach problems d) diabetes e) urinary infection. f) anaemia g) deficiency diseases h) low weight and BMI.
12. Are you able to take proper care, give nourishment and education for healthy brought up of your children?
13. Is your employer help you in any regard in respect of above asked questions?

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