KNOWLEDGE ON OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH HAZARDS AND UTILIZATION
OF SAFETY MEASURES AMONG WORKERS

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ABSTRACT

In India, Industrialization not only brought economic growth but a wide variety of health problems associated with it. Worldwide, workers are involved in a broad range of industries and occupational activities that render them at a higher risk for acquiring work-related injuries compared to the general population. Factory workers are exposed to effects of various physical and chemical hazards over a long period of time. They need to prevent occupational hazards at work by utilizing the safety measures. This was a descriptive study, where a self-structured questionnaire was used for assessing the knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures among 100 factory workers. The data analysis was done by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that Maximum (56.0%) percentages of factory workers fall in the level of average knowledge score and minimum (19%) percentages of factory workers were fall in level of good knowledge score. While analyzing association of knowledge of factory workers on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures with selected demographic variables it was found that there is a significant relationship between level of education, Working experience knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures. The study revealed that (56%) of factory workers were fall in the average knowledge score. Thus factory workers should be given information booklet to increase knowledge regarding occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures.

Key Words: Occupational Health Hazards, Safety Measures.

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INTRODUCTION
Work is considered as a basic part of our life. Most adults spend approximately one third to one fourth of their time at work and often perceive work as a part of their self-identity. Like home and school, the place of work is an important part of man’s environment. The health and efficiency of the worker working in any organization get influenced in large measures by conditions prevailing in their work environment. The prevailing conditions are related to physical, biological, chemical and social agents. A worker is usually exposed to these agents for about 6-8 hours daily. It is therefore, essential that this work environment should be wholesome and free from any kind of harmful agents.

Occupational health and safety is a cross-disciplinary area concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work or employment. Safety is a priority of any industrial activity. The goal of all occupational health and safety programs is to foster a safe work environment. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) require that employers protect their employees from workplace hazards that can cause injury. Safety measures means Personal protective equipment commonly referred to as “PPE”, is equipment worn to minimize exposure to a variety of hazards. Example of PPE includes such items as gloves, foot and eye protection, protective hearing devices (earplugs, muff) hard hats, respirators and full body suits. The manner in which workers perform a task can appreciably affect exposure, so it is important to train workers in good work practices.

Prevention of occupational disease is of a vital importance, since most of the disease could be prevented, if there is adequate awareness among the workers. Worker’s knowledge about the hazards associated with their jobs and worker’s education especially instruction on control and use of personal protective measures is helpful to reduce and may even eliminate some occupational health risk.

Need for the study
Today the trend in all countries is towards industrialization. Industrial workers are placed in a highly complicated environment which is getting more complicated as man is becoming ingenious in nature. As industries are developing, occupational diseases are also becoming more prominent. Occupation is an important component of socio-economic status which plays a vital role in both individual’s life and a nation’s progress. In India, Industrialization not only brought economic growth but a wide variety of health problems associated with it.

Now a Days, industrial workers are exposed to the effects of various physical and chemical hazards over long period of time. Workers working in factories and mines are given special attention because of the nature and extent of hazards in their environment. Since the investigator realized the truth that the nurses can influence on the mass and they are always with the people and meant for good health educator and can improve the knowledge about occupational hazards and its preventive measures. So if they are well informed about need and importance of occupational hazards prevention, they can communicate the knowledge with factory workers to implement preventive measures.

PROBLEM STATEMENT
A descriptive study to assess the Knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures among workers at selected factories of Mukerian, Punjab.

OBJECTIVES:
1. To assess the knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures among factory workers.
2. To determine the association of knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures among factory workers with selected demographic variables.
3. To prepare an information booklet on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures.

Research Methodology
Research approach: Quantitative approach was adopted
Research design: A non experimental descriptive research design was considered.
Research Variables: A research variable of the study was knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures.
Research setting: This study was conducted in Indian Sucrose Limited sugar factory, Mukerian of district Hoshiarpur, Punjab.
Target Population: In this study the target population was sugar factory workers.
Sample and Sampling technique: Sample for the present study comprised of 100 workers of sugar factory and non randomized purposive sampling technique was selected.

Development of data collection tool: After extensive review of literature and with the help of expert opinion, tool was prepared having following sections.

Part-1: This part included demographic information of the sample and includes eight items i.e. Age, Marital status, Education, Income, Working experience, Habits, Working areas, Nature of employment.

Part-2: It consists of self structured knowledge questionnaires for assessing the knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures. It included 30 items. Self Structured knowledge Questionnaire on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures.

FINDINGS: The result of the study revealed that majority (56.0%) of factory workers fall in the level of average knowledge score and (25%) of factory workers fall in the level of poor knowledge score and remaining (19%) factory workers fall in good knowledge score.

CONCLUSION: The study revealed that majority (56%) of factory workers has average knowledge score on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures and (25%) of factory workers has poor knowledge score and (19%) of factory workers have good knowledge score. There is a statistically significant association of level of knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures with level of education and working experience. Thus, factory workers should be given information booklet to increase knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures.

Recommendations
- A similar study may be replicated on a large sample to validate and generalize the findings.
- A quasi-experimental study may be conducted to assess the effectiveness of structured teaching program on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures among factory workers at selected factory.
- A quasi experimental study may be conducted to assess the effectiveness of planned teaching Programme on knowledge on occupational health hazards and utilization of safety measures among factory workers at selected factory.

REFERENCES: