

CAUSES AND IMPACT OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH HAZARDS AMONG THE SANITARY WORKERS: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY BASED ON THE JAFFNA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

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Abstract

Occupational health hazards have become a serious health issue in modern society. Sanitary workers are one of the risk groups of occupational health hazards. The main objective of this study is to assess the causes and the impact of occupational health hazards among the sanitary workers. Mixed method was used for this institutional based study. Based on the simple random sampling technique 196 Sanitary workers were selected for this study. Primary data were collected through the interviewer administered questionnaire, case study method, focus group interview, key informant interviews and observation method. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically. Quantitative data were analyzed using a descriptive statistical method with the support of SPSS (version 23). Results of the study reveal that the majority of the sanitary workers from the Jaffna Municipal Council were involved in cleaning roads, drainage canals and public toilets and solid waste collection which caused occupational health hazards. Results reveal that 79.6% of the sanitary workers used the personal protective equipment during work while 24.6% of the sanitary were not used protective equipment. Results show that 59.7% of the sanitary workers had occupational health hazards such as skin diseases, respiratory problems and other health problems. Sanitary workers were discriminated against due to occupational health hazards. The findings of the study conclude that the majority of the sanitary workers encountered occupational health hazards. Therefore, health education programs on prevention of occupational health hazards should be organized routinely for the sanitary workers.

Keywords: Communicable diseases, Discrimination, Personal protective equipment, Respiratory diseases, Skin diseases