

Prevalence of traumatic injuries among female workers in garment industry in Dickwella Divisional Secretariat area

Sewwandi HRA¹, Fonseka NHDP¹, De Silva PV²

¹Nursing Degree Programme, ²Department of Community Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

Introduction

Work related injuries are a major public health problem in Sri Lanka today. Garment industry is the major foreign exchange revenue in Sri Lanka and work related traumatic injuries are more common among garment industry workers, the majority of which are women.

This study was conducted to identify the prevalence and associated factors of traumatic injuries among female workers in garment industry.

Methods

A cross-sectional study was conducted among female garment workers working in two garment factories in Dickwella Divisional Secretariat area. Three hundred and twelve workers were randomly selected according to the proportion of total workers in each factory. Data was collected by a self-administered questionnaire. All data was analyzed using Statistical Package of Social Sciences.

Results

The sample consisted of 312 female workers. The mean age range was 26-35 years. Most (63.8%) of the participants had educated up to G.C.E. Ordinary Level. One hundred and seventy-four (55.8%) were sewing machine operators. Of the participants, 73.1% worked 8-9 hours per day and 53.5% worked 6-10 hours per week as overtime. Prevalence of traumatic injuries was 35.3% among workers during the previous 12 months. Rushing at work (46.4%) was the most common cause followed by carelessness (25.5%). Puncture injuries (48.2%) were the commonest type of injuries while contusions and abrasions (19.1%) were the second common type and fingers (57.8%) were the commonest body part injured. Large majority (91.3%) of participants were satisfied about the safety of the working environment.

Conclusions

There was a moderate prevalence of traumatic injuries among female workers in garment industry in Dickwella Divisional Secretariat area. Although a large majority of the workers are satisfied with the working environment, worker related causes such as rushing at work and carelessness were identified as major reasons for injuries.