

April 29-30, 2019
London, UK

Zuha Miaary et al., Arch Med 2019, Volume 11
DOI: 10.21767/1989-5216-C1-008

Physical and psychosocial ergonomic risk factors for pain and disability among waiters

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Background: Ergonomic risk factors for musculoskeletal pain among waiters include food preparation, serving, cleaning and storing tools, speed and repetitive work, mental load, smooth surfaces, heat, humidity and noise.

Objectives: To assess the prevalence of work related musculoskeletal pain (WRMSP) among waiters, and to evaluate the association between work hazards and WRMSP.

Methods: An observational cross-sectional study. One hundred waiters, working at least two years, aged 18-60 working full-time took part in the study. Excluding criteria were serious accidents and spinal and skeletal surgeries, with pain lasting longer than three months. Participants filled out seven questionnaires: basic demographics and working conditions; Occupational-medical-historical questionnaire, the Neck Disability Index (NDI), Quick Disabilities of the Arms, Shoulders and Hands (DASH), the Modified Oswestry Low Back Pain Disability Questionnaire (MOQ), a psychosocial questionnaire containing workload estimation (WL), burnout (BMQ) and job satisfaction at work (JAQ), the Nordic and the Task questionnaires. Twenty waiters were randomly observed while working and photographed during one rash hour each using the Rapid Entire Body Assessment (REBA) worksheet. The weight of dishes and food carried by the waiters was weighed, and their steps were counted by a pedometer.

Results: The Oswestry and DASH questionnaires

revealed minimal to moderate pain and disability in low back and upper quadrant respectively. NDI revealed mild disability of the Neck. 12 months pain prevalence for the neck was 41.8%, shoulders-53%, elbows 46% and lower back 45%. Burnout and job satisfaction were significantly associated with pain in the lower back, neck, and upper extremities. REBA results (Mean=7.7) showed 50% positions with medium risk, 35% with high risk and 15% with very high risk.

Conclusions: Ergonomic stressors, burnout and job satisfaction are associates with disability of LBP and upper quadrant among waiters. However, organizational and ergonomically changes for reducing work-related stress are needed.

Biography

Zuha Miaary has completed her B A in Nursing at Tel-Aviv University, where she continues her Master in Occupational Health focusing on Ergonomics specialization and works as a Coordinator of the council for higher education in nursing department. Further, as a nurse in a reputable emergency medicine center which demands quick thinking and decisive action to provide care and monitor health conditions. She volunteers in an Arab feminist movement that struggles against oppression in all its forms and shapes, which provides psychosocial support and legal advice to women subjected to sexual violence to raise awareness among school students on the issue of sexual assaults and gender issues.

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