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Physical and mental well-being and job satisfaction among male construction workers in selected urban construction sites in Sri Lanka

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Background: Construction sites are mushrooming everywhere in the urbanized areas of Sri Lanka, keeping pace with the rapid economic development. As this industry is inseparably associated with numerous risks endangering the workers, it is important to assess and identify any potential overall health impairments.

Objectives: Our aim was aimed to assess the physical and mental wellbeing and job satisfaction among male construction workers in selected urban construction sites.

Methods: A cross sectional descriptive study was carried out in a sample of 120 male workers at three urban construction sites using an interviewer administered questionnaire that was specially designed. Socio-demographic factors, level of physical activity, nutrition and diet, alcohol and smoking, rest and sleep, energy and fatigue, pain and discomfort, level of mental wellbeing and level of job satisfaction of them were assessed. Rate of Perceived Exertion Scale (CR10), Fatigue Severity Scale, Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, Job Satisfaction Survey used in designing the tool for data collection and for the sections questionnaires which were validated through a content expert. Data was analysed using SPSS version 22.

Results: A majority (N=88, 73.3%) of the workers monthly earned more than thirty thousand rupees. Most (N=51, 42.5%) were engaged in vigorous physical activities. Most (N=68, 56.7%) had normal BMI while 21(20.8%) were underweight. Current prevalence of alcohol use and smoking were 55.0% (N=66) and 44.2% (N=54) respectively whereas 24(36.9%) were consuming alcohol for more than 10 years and 5(9.4%) were smoking more than 10 pack years. Majority (N=69, 57.5%) had adequate sleep but most (N=70, 58.3%) were not involved in leisure activities. Majority (N=100, 83.3%) was not fatigued whereas 80(66.6%) had musculoskeletal pains, most common being the back pain. Most had good mental wellbeing (N=119, 99.2%) and good job satisfaction (N=115, 94.8%).

Conclusions: In conclusion the monthly income of majority of the workers was high and the overall nutritional status was satisfactory whereas alcohol use and smoking were significantly prevalent in comparison to the general population. Many suffered from musculoskeletal pains but majority had good mental wellbeing and were satisfied about their job.