

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH HAZARDS AMONG WHOLESALERS

(A Case Study of Garment and Cloth Merchants of Ludhiana City)

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Mode of Study : F. Time

ABSTRACT

Wholesalers play an important role in Supply Chain Management. But due to less physical activities, mental stress and more comfort level they may suffer from many occupational health hazards. Literature reveals that with change in the lifestyle of the people there is increase in the number of patients of the coronary heart disease mainly in occupations having less physical activities. The present research work investigates occupational health hazards of wholesalers of cloths & garments market of Ludhiana city. A qualitative study was done on 64 wholesalers of the market and 64 control group members who were selected from agriculture background. Due to financial & time constraints quantitative study was done on 22 members of each group. In qualitative study data was collected through questionnaire and for quantitative study physical examinations were performed and analyzed with statistical tests at 95% level of significance. The results of an independent t-test showed that there was significance difference in parameters such as education, sitting per day, chest pain, high cholesterol, fatigue, breathing problems, and high blood pressure of wholesalers from the control group. Large difference in between two selected groups was for sitting per day, it was 7.39 ± 0.96 hours for wholesalers and 2.12 ± 0.86 hours for control group. The findings of one way ANOVA indicated that there was significant difference in parameters such as high cholesterol, fatigue, marital status, back pain, high blood pressure, non-vegetarian, diabetes, visit to doctor and spicy food among different age groups of wholesalers. For physical examination, results of an independent t-test revealed that there was significant difference in parameters such as heart problems, hypertension and BMI of wholesalers from control group. Approx. 14% more wholesalers had abnormal ECG, approx. 19% wholesalers had obesity & overweight and approx. 27% more wholesalers had hypertension as compared to control group members. Although spirometer results pointed difference in the values for two selected groups but no group faces any type of lung problem. It had been also noted that blood pressure increases from morning to afternoon & from afternoon to evening in both groups, but this increase was more in

wholesalers. In order to reduce the health problems among wholesalers, it has been recommended that 1 hour before closing market air conditioner space temperature has to be slowly increased up to 32°C in steps of 2°C after an interval of 15min to reduce the large step changes in ambient air temperature of wholesalers. It is also recommended to do daily routine moderate exercises such as 3.2 km walking in 30 minutes, running 2.4 km in 15 minutes, jumping rope for 15 minutes and walking stairs for 15 minutes etc. Further, association of wholesalers must arrange at least one compulsory medical camp for wholesalers within six months.