

A sociological study on occupational health hazards of wood mill labourers

Kavya CN

Research Scholar, Department of Sociology, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta, Shivamoga, Karnataka state

Abstract

The research paper presents the qualitative analysis of occupational health hazards of wood mill labourers. A study was carried out with the sample of 25 wood mills in Hassan city of Hassan district of Karnataka state. For this study, qualitative method was used. The analysis has been done on the basis of in-depth interviews with those who are wood mill labourers in Hassan district. For this study, data was collected from 100 wood mill labourers by using random sampling. The present paper aims to find out the occupational health hazards facing by wood mill labourers. The main finding of the study shown that occupational health hazards are becomes challenges to development of wood mill labourers.

Keywords: Health Hazards and Wood Mill Labourers

1. Introduction

Health is an essential requirement of every individual and so much so of national and international society. "Health is a condition or quality of the human organism expressing the adequate functioning of the organism in given conditions, genetic and environmental." "Health is the condition of being sound in body, mind or spirit especially freedom from physical disease or pain." Health is the precious possession of all human being as it is an asset for an individual and community as well. Healthy individual and community can carry out daily living activities and life enriching goal. At present "Health for all" is the global goal.

Health is multidimensional as according to "World Health Organization" it envisages three specific dimensions – the physical, the mental and the social, many more cited spiritual, emotional, vocational and political dimensions. So health is a necessary criterion.

Occupation is an important criterion of a person to lead life properly. According to Basavanna's statement "Kayakave kilasa" so without occupation people can't enjoy their livelihood. The act or process of occupying or taking possession central possession and control the state of being occupied a holding. In occupation it has three types of fields that are primary field, secondary field and tertiary field. Occupational health is essentially preventive medicine. Occupational health should aim to the promotion and maintenance of the highest degree of physical, mental and social, well being of workers in all occupations.

During 18th century, in all over world the process take place is Industrialization. Due to the industrialization process, many industries and new system were developed. Along with this some problems also were created. In the past, it was customary to think of occupational health entirely in relation to the industrial health were in vogue. The subjects of industrial hygiene, industrial diseases, industrial accidents, toxicology in relation to industrial hazards.

One of the declared aims of occupational environment in order to safe guard the health of the workers and to step up industrial production. Occupational hazards are common in industry. The labourers may be exposed to absorption through skin, ingestion,

injection and accidental puncture of wounds. Inhalation and ingestion are the most common routes of most of the hazardous materials.

Labour-According to the Oxford dictionary, Labour means bodily or mental work, exertion, toil leading to supply wants of the community body of those who contribute by toil to production, labourers and the labour group etc. An industry labourer may be exposed to so many hazards depending upon their occupation. They are physical hazards, chemical hazards, biological hazards, mechanical hazards, psychosocial hazards etc.

The common Physical hazard in all most is heat and cold, eyesight problem, noise, vibration, ultraviolet radiation, ionizing radiation etc.

The Chemical hazards are on the increase with the introduction of newer and complex chemicals. Chemical agents act in three ways: local action, inhalation and ingestion.

The Biological hazards – worker may be exposed to infective and parasitic agents at the place of work. The occupational diseases in this category are brucellosis, leptospirosis, hydatidosis, psittacosis, tetanus, encephalitis, persons working among schistosomiasis and a host of others.

The Mechanical hazards in industry centre round machinery. Protruding and moving parts and the like. About 10 percent of accidents in industry are said to be due to mechanical causes.

The Psychosocial hazards arise from the worker's failure to adapt to an alien psychosocial environment. Frustration, lack of job satisfaction, insecurity, poor human relationships, emotional tension are some of the psychosocial factors which may undermine both physical and mental health of the labourers.

This study is about occupational health hazards in small scale wood mills like planing, turning, carpentry, carving and small scale cutting mills. The wood mill labourers today are placed in a highly complicated environment which is getting more complicated as man is becoming more ingenious. As per concerning what are those occupational health hazards for the wood mill labourers. For these we are trying to find the solutions through the sociological approach.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To study the occupational health hazards of wood mill labourers.
2. To know how these occupational health hazards are challenges to development of wood mill labourers.

3. Research Methodology

The present study is based on the primary data which is collected from the 25 wood mills in Hassan city of Karnataka state. Through the random sampling methods 100 wood mill labourers were selected to generate primary data. Detailed information of the attitudes and opinions of the respondents

were collected through pre-tested structured interview schedule which is comprised of pre-coded and open – ended questions regarding objectives of the research. The primary data was collected employing interview schedule directly from the respondents and the secondary data were collected from books, journals related to wood mills and industrial labourers. The data collections are processed in a systematic way. The data are edited for checking their completeness and accuracy. The data is tabulated and processed in the table by using computer.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Age Profile of the Wood Mill Labourers

Age	Frequency	Percent
21-30	15	15
31-40	48	48
41-50	27	27
Above 51	10	10

The result pertaining to age profile of the respondents who are working in wood mills is depicted in table 01. The data table 01 revealed that 15% of respondents are belongs to the age group of 21 to 30. 48% of respondents are belongs to the age group of From 31 to 40, it shows that half of the respondents are belongs to the age of 31 to 40. This age group is more in doing the work is because they are having responsibility of their family as well as they are ready to do any works to earn their livelihood. In this way they are going to work which is necessary for them at the age group from 31 to 40. 27% of respondents belong to the age group of 41 to 50. Who belongs to this group is earning to lead their life. Only 10% of respondents are belongs to the age group which is of above 51 years, because this age group is more depended on their younger generation and also they are losing their working strength and body strength.

The information in table 02 depict that the occupational health hazards of wood mill labourers. The result indicated that 60% of respondents felt that they are fear about the high weight things may be fall upon them and may cause hazards to them. 70% of respondents had fear about the working with machines, because by working with machines they may lose their body parts like fingers, hands, or some injuries. So they are feared about working with machines. 70% of respondents felt that they have fear to work with machines may cause fire injuries and it may cause damages to them and even we also came to know about these damages in reality when we interviewed them. The study reveals that by doing this work it had its impact on labourers of wood cutting and planing mills. 100% of respondents are suffering from the dust allergy, 90% of respondents are suffering from to over noise (sound) which made them to suffer this diseases or problems with regard to ear, mindset and nervous system also may came to unhealthy position. 30% of respondents felt that by doing this work they suffering from asthma. It is observed that 20% of respondents suffering from general allergy because they are uncomfortable with their working condition. 20% of respondents felt that they are suffering from chemical reaction because of their work; sometimes they adopted some chemical things so in that situation chemical reaction may cause reactions in their body. 18% of respondents felt that they are facing some accidents due to working with the machine they are losing their body parts like fingers, hands leg, eyes, etc. 80% of wood laboures suffering from tension and work stress due to their work, 35% of respondents are facing eyesight problems, 28% of laboures suffering from wooden peaces due to their work. It may cause damages to them to any part. The proportion of vibration for wood mill labourers is about 36%. 28% of wood mill labourers felt that they are facing the problem of heat. 52% of respondents suffering from back pain because of continuous work. 64% of respondents are suffering from chest pain because of high weight of the wooden pieces. 76% of wood mill laboures suffering from body pain. Due to this work 10% them have respiratory diseases like cancer, lung cancer, fever etc. and 37% of wood mill labourers are suffering of cough when they inhale the dust then it may leads to cough.

In wood mill there is a first aid facility in which if in mills any person may by accidentally commit any injury they are treated

Table 2: Occupational Health Hazards of Wood Mill Labourers

Aspects	Percent	
	Yes	No
Occupational Hazards		
Fear about the things which are of high weight may be fall upon them.	60	40
Due to working with the machines they had fear about losing their body parts like fingers, hands etc.	70	30
Fire injuries	70	30
Health hazards		
Dust allergy	100	00
Over noise(sound)	90	10
Asthma	30	70
General allergy	20	80
Chemical reaction to body	20	80
Accidents	18	82
Tension and work stress	80	20
Eye sight problems	35	65
Suffering from wooden pieces	28	72
Vibrations	36	64
Heat	28	72
Back pain	52	48
Chest pain	64	36
Body pain	76	24
Respiratory diseases	10	90
Cough	37	63

with first aid services. We also find that there is no any problems are suffering from ill health they were not forced to do work and they provide them leave facility. While doing the work they must do their works properly if they neglect even a small work or if they are lose their confidence as well as in their ill health conditions they may have so many injuries and it is also threatened to their body parts and life.

5. Impacts of occupational health hazards on development of wood mill labourers

- 1. Harmony less family life:** - Due to their occupational health hazards there is a less harmony in their family life. It may cause family disturbance it also affect on the health and the mindset of their family members, especially on children.
- 2. No proper socialization of children:** - Because of disturbances there is no proper socialization of their children and they may lead their life without caring to anybody and they may also commit to crime. Without proper socialization children will not be suitable to lead life in the society.
- 3. Economic depressions:** - This occupational health hazards even had its effect on the economy. Because it is not possible to live without money. By this they are always in tensions as well as they may not provide their children with good education. Their economy means the salary they are getting which is also insufficient to use it for their health related problems. And made them to take credit due to poor economic condition.
- 4. Non social participation:** - Even though due to this low economy, degraded work those who are suffering from society because they are not ready to participate in the matter of social participation they treated them as a separate from the group . There is negligence by the society also.
- 5. Less life expectancy:** - By doing work in the wood mills they have low life expectancy because due to so many health hazards may create health problems and it made them to goes on decrease of their life expectancy.

6. Suggestions

1. For the wood mill laboures working hours in mill should be reduced.
2. They must provide with immediate medical treatment whenever they face the occupational hazards.
3. For each and every wood mill labourers life insurance should be made if they had any problem with regard to their life. And also insurance for their fingers, hands, leg, eyes etc.
4. There must be a frequent or regular checkups should be conducted to labourers to keep their health properly.
5. There should be frequent bathing facilities in mills only to be free from all dust.
6. Proper schedule time must be fixing to labourers to work with that time only.
7. They must use face mask while doing their work and also provide safe gourds to fingers, hands, leg etc.
8. In working hours they must be given rest hours to be free for few hours from work which reduces the strain.
9. Provision must be given to enforce compulsory labour acts. Laour act should be implementing to this labourers.
10. They must provide with good and nutritious food benefits and Good drinking water facility.

11. Precautions should be taken while doing work with fireworks.
12. Industry should provide them with sound proof system to avoid over noise.

7. Conclusion

Prevention is better than cure. For any works in industries there is an occupational health hazard, which occurs in one way or the other. Occupational hazards cannot be stopped but it may be prevented before happening by taking suitable measures. As per concerning our study it deals with the occupational health hazard in wood cutting and planing mills in which labourers are the sufferers even they facing difficulty in doing works. So through this study we came to know about that the wood mill labourers are facing occupational health hazards and these occupational hazards only became an impediment to their health and overall development.

8. References

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