



Occupational health hazards of women construction workers in Coimbatore city

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ABSTRACT

Health at work and healthy work environment are amongst the most valuable assets of individuals, communities and countries. Occupational health is an important strategy not only to ensure the health of workers, but also to contribute positively to productivity, quality of products, work motivation, job satisfaction and thereby to the overall quality of life of individuals and society. The construction industry is responsible for around four per cent of particulate emissions along with water, air and noise pollution. The study was conducted in construction sites in Coimbatore city. Women construction workers who spend most of their working time in this environment were found to be affected by inhaling the polluted air, Water available for use was also found to be contaminated with dust/dirt (68%), debris (32%) emerging from construction activity and being exposed to noise, high levels of dust (typically from concrete, cement, wood and stone) which get carried for large distances over a long period of time. Headache, nausea, irritation, partial deafness, which they endured by the end of the day eventually may lead to serious hearing problems in the long run. The samples doubtlessly inhaled polluted air for more than eight hours a day. The study revealed that the selected samples were exposed to intense heat of the sun, rain and high humidity in addition to physical workload combined with awkward posture during performance of activities. Such exposures leave tell tale marks on their health status and they were found to suffer from exposure – specific ailments.