MORBIDITY PROFILE OF CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AGED ABOVE 14 YEARS IN SELECTED AREAS OF BANGALORE URBAN DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT: BACKGROUND: Construction sector is a booming industry and involves many hazardous activities. Migrant labour in the industry is susceptible to various health and occupational hazards. AIM: To estimate the prevalence of various morbidities among workers aged above 14 years in building construction industry. SETTINGS AND DESIGN: A population based cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in the field practice areas of Raja Rajeswari Medical College and Hospital, Bengaluru from April 2013 to March 2014. METHODS AND MATERIAL: Three building construction sites were randomly selected to meet the required sample size of 591 construction workers. Information was collected by interview method using a pre-designed, pre-tested questionnaire followed by clinical examination. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS USED: Data was analyzed using SPSS software version 20. Various morbidities among the construction workers were being presented as frequency and percentages. RESULTS: Most prevalent morbidities among the construction workers were Psychological Distress, Respiratory Diseases, Musculoskeletal Diseases, Hypertension and Dermatitis in the order of their frequency. 30.8% of the construction workers were under weight (Body Mass Index <18.5kg/m²). CONCLUSION: First aid services and safety measures, Periodic general health check-up facilities, Health education activities, Health insurance schemes, etc. will ensure health promotion, health protection and highest degree of well-being among the construction workers.

KEYWORDS: Morbidity Profile, Construction Workers, Unorganized Sector.

INTRODUCTION: Construction is one of the important industries employing a large number of people on its workforce.¹ Building and construction industry is recognized as the un-organized sector with vast labour intensity and economic activity after agriculture in India. This industry generates demand for both skilled and semi-skilled labour force. However, these labourers' work is temporary and casual natured with lack of basic amenities and inadequate welfare facilities.² Due to the advent of industrialization and recent developments, this industry is taking a pivotal role for construction of buildings, roads, bridges and so forth.¹ In India, nearly two-thirds of the contribution to the NDP (Net Domestic Product) is by the unorganized sector.³

Not enough studies have been done on the morbidity profile of building construction workers who work at various construction sites in Bengaluru (A mega city undergoing rapid urbanization) though very few studies have been done in Karnataka state. Hence this study was carried out to know the various morbidities of construction workers and their prevalence rates and the safety measures that those construction workers follow, so that further recommendations and implementations could be made towards their health education, health promotion, health protection and maintenance of highest degree of their physical, mental and social well-being.

MATERIALS & METHODS: A population based cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted in the field practice areas of Raja Rajeswari Medical College and Hospital, Bengaluru. Three building construction sites were randomly selected out of seven building construction sites in the field practice areas to meet the required sample size. The three sites were Raja Rajeswari Medical College & Hospital (parts of the institution were still under construction during the period of study), one Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) Apartment construction in Kengeri (Nearby to Raja Rajeswari Medical College & Hospital) and one private Apartment construction nearby to Urban Health Centre (UHC) Channasandra (One of the field practice areas of Raja Rajeswari Medical College & Hospital).

Inclusion Criteria: A child is a person who has not completed his fourteenth year of age. No child shall be employed or permitted to work in any of the occupations and processes specified by the Ministry of Labour and Employment of the Government of India in The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 and Rules.⁴ Hence, Building Construction Workers aged above 14 years at the three construction sites mentioned above who gave their informed consent to participate in the study were considered.

There were approximately 2000 building construction workers in those three building construction sites. Out of them, 591 workers were randomly selected using a table of random numbers. The sample size was calculated by using the prevalence of least morbidity among construction workers. Prevalence rate of acute febrile illness (23.11%) in the study by Adsul BB et.al.³ was considered. Considering an allowable error of 15% of p(L=0.03467) and a confidence interval of 95%, the sample size was calculated.

Ethical clearance was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) of Raja Rajeswari Medical College & Hospital, Bengaluru.

The study was done in a medical examination-cum-first aid room that already existed in each of the building construction sites. The purpose of the study was explained to the construction workers and informed consent was obtained. Necessary information was collected from building construction workers aged above 14 years by interview method with the help of a pre-designed, pre-tested questionnaire followed by clinical examination.

International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD-10) version 2014 by WHO⁵ was used to assess the morbidity profile of construction workers. The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)⁶ was used to assess Psychological Distress among the construction workers. The construction workers who scored more than 30 on the scale of 50 were considered as having Psychological Distress. JNC VII criteria for Hypertension⁷ were used to classify the study subjects according to their blood pressure. CDC criteria for Body Mass Index (BMI)⁸ were used to classify the study subjects according to their BMI values.

Data collected was categorized, tabulated and then analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software version 20, 2011. Various morbidities among the construction workers were being presented as frequency and percentages.

RESULTS: Most prevalent morbidities among Construction Workers were Psychological Distress (43.65%), Generalized Body Pain (20.81%), Hypertension (19.63%), Non-Specific Headache (19.63%), Pallor upon clinical examination (18.61%), Non-Specific Fever (15.91%), Gastritis (15.57%), Low Back Pain (14.89%) and so on. Out of 591 Construction Workers, 116 of them

(19.63%) were Hypertensive and 237 of them (40.10%) were Pre-Hypertensive while the remaining 238 of them (40.27%) were having normal Blood Pressure. 347 out of the 591 Construction Workers (58.71%) had a normal Body Mass Index (BMI) while 182 of them (30.80%) were underweight, 58 of them (09.81%) were overweight and only 4 of them (00.68%) were obese. Mean Body Mass Index of the study subjects was 20.5 ± 3.4 kg/m².

MORBIDITY PROFILE:

Chanter*	Disease / Disorder /	Present	Absont	Total
Chapter	Symptom / Sign**	riesent	Absent	IUldi
	I. Certain infectious a	nd parasitic di	seases	
I	Bacillary Dysentery	018 (03.05)	573 (96.95)	591 (100.00)
	Acute Watery Diarrhoea	004 (00.68)	587 (99.32)	591 (100.00)
	Scabies	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	II. Neop	olasms		
II	Lipoma	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
III. Diseas	ses of the Blood and Blood-Form	ing Organs an	d the Immune	Mechanism
	NO SIGNIFICANT MOF	RBIDITY IDEN	FIFIED	
	IV. Endocrine, Nutritiona	l and Metaboli	c diseases	
IV	Diabetes mellitus	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	V. Mental and Beha	vioural disord	lers	
v	Psychological Distress***	258 (43.65)	333 (56.35)	591 (100.00)
	Inadequate / Disturbed Sleep	088 (14.89)	503 (85.11)	591 (100.00)
	VI. Diseases of the	Nervous Syste	em	
VI	Hemiparesis	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	VII. Diseases of the	e Eye and Adno	exa	
VII	Conjunctivitis	036 (06.09)	555 (93.91)	591 (100.00)
	Refractive Errors	034 (05.75)	557 (94.25)	591 (100.00)
	Pterygium	010 (01.69)	581 (98.31)	591 (100.00)
	Cataract	010 (01.69)	581 (98.31)	591 (100.00)
	Chalazion	004 (00.68)	587 (99.32)	591 (100.00)
Chanter*	Disease / Disorder /	Present	Absent	Total
Chapter	Symptom / Sign**			
	Ptosis	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	VIII. Diseases of the Ea	r and Mastoid	Process	
VIII	Otitis Media	014 (02.37)	577 (97.63)	591 (100.00)
IX. Diseases of the Circulatory System				
IX	Hypertension	116 (19.63)	475 (80.37)	591 (100.00)
	Varicose veins	004 (00.68)	587 (99.32)	591 (100.00)
X. Diseases of the Respiratory System				
X	Rhinitis	066 (11.17)	525 (88.83)	591 (100.00)
	Sinusitis	010 (01.69)	581 (98.31)	591 (100.00)

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	Upper Respiratory Infections	076 (12.85)	515 (87.15)	591 (100.00)
	Lower Respiratory Infections	042 (07.11)	549 (92.89)	591 (100.00)
	Deviated Nasal Septum	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Nasal Polyp	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	XI. Diseases of the	Digestive Syst	em	
XI	Gastritis	092 (15.57)	499 (84.43)	591 (100.00)
	Constipation	028 (04.74)	563 (95.26)	591 (100.00)
	Dental Fluorosis	010 (01.69)	581 (98.31)	591 (100.00)
	Acute Appendicitis	008 (01.35)	583 (98.65)	591 (100.00)
	Tooth Ache	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
	Dental Caries	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Tooth Cavity	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Hernia	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
Chantor*	Disease / Disorder /	Drecont	Abcont	Total
Chapter	Symptom / Sign**	Present	Absent	Total
XII. Diseases of the Skin and Sub-cutaneous tissue				
XII	Dermatitis	032 (05.41)	559 (94.59)	591 (100.00)
	Rashes	008 (01.35)	583 (98.65)	591 (100.00)
XI	II. Diseases of the Musculoskele	tal System and	Connective T	issue
XIII	Generalized Body Pain	123 (20.81)	468 (79.19)	591 (100.00)
	Low Back Pain	088 (14.89)	503 (85.11)	591 (100.00)
	Knee Joint Pain	042 (07.11)	549 (92.89)	591 (100.00)
	Shoulder Joint Pain	010 (01.69)	581 (98.31)	591 (100.00)
	Decreased range of movements	006 (01 02)	585 (98 98)	591 (100 00)
	of joint/s	000 (01.02)	303 (70.70)	571 (100.00)
	Pain and stiffness of neck	004 (00.68)	587 (99.32)	591 (100.00)
	Wrist Joint Pain	004 (00.68)	587 (99.32)	591 (100.00)
XIV. Diseases of the Genito-Urinary System				
XIV	Menstrual Abnormalities****	022 (12.64)	152 (87.36)	174 (100.00)
	Dermatitis of the groin region	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
	Urinary Tract Infection	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	XV. Pregnancy, Childbir	th and the Pue	rperium	1
XV	Pregnancy****	022 (12.64)	152 (87.36)	174 (100.00)
	Gestational Anaemia****	012 (06.90)	162 (93.10)	174 (100.00)
	Gestational Diabetes****	004 (02.30)	170 (97.70)	174 (100.00)
XVI. Certain conditions originating in the perinatal period				
NO SIGNIFICANT MORBIDITY IDENTIFIED				
Chanter*	Disease / Disorder /	Present	Ahsent	Total
	Symptom / Sign**	i i cocht	noscht	istai
XVII. Congenital malformations, Deformations and Chromosomal abnormalities				
XVII	Fissured Ear Lobe	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
XVIII. Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical Findings not classified elsewhere				

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XVIII	Non-specific Headache	116 (19.63)	475 (80.37)	591 (100.00)
	Non-specific Fever	094 (15.91)	497 (84.09)	591 (100.00)
	Fever with Chills	024 (04.06)	567 (95.94)	591 (100.00)
	Fever with Rashes	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Non-specific Chest Pain	018 (03.05)	573 (96.95)	591 (100.00)
	Tinnitus	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Hypertrophy of Nasal Turbinates	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
	Non-specific Abdominal Pain	042 (07.11)	549 (92.89)	591 (100.00)
	Non-specific Abdominal Tenderness	016 (02.71)	575 (97.29)	591 (100.00)
	Burning Micturition	008 (01.35)	583 (98.65)	591 (100.00)
	Giddiness	039 (06.60)	552 (93.40)	591 (100.00)
	Unable to recall the past	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
	Lack of concentration at work	004 (00.68)	587 (99.32)	591 (100.00)
	Throat pain	008 (01.35)	583 (98.65)	591 (100.00)
	Dysphagia	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
	Bleeding Gums	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Pain in TM Joints	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
	Pallor****	110 (18.61)	481 (81.39)	591 (100.00)
Chapter*	Disease / Disorder / Symptom / Sign**	Present	Absent	Total
	Icterus	014 (02.37)	577 (97.63)	591 (100.00)
	Cyanosis	005 (00.85)	586 (99.15)	591 (100.00)
	Clubbing	014 (02.37)	577 (97.63)	591 (100.00)
	Cardiac Murmurs	006 (01.02)	585 (98.98)	591 (100.00)
	Hepatosplenomegaly	008 (01.35)	583 (98.65)	591 (100.00)
	Deviated Angle of the Mouth	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
XIX. Injury, Poisoning and Certain other consequences of External causes				
XIX	Injuries	022 (03.72)	569 (96.28)	591 (100.00)
XX. External causes of morbidity and mortality				
XX	Accidents	034 (05.75)	557 (94.25)	591 (100.00)
XXI. Factors influencing the health status and contact with health services				
XXI	Pseudophakia	002 (00.34)	589 (99.66)	591 (100.00)
Table 1: Morbidities among the Construction Workers (n = 591)				

* According to International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems 10th Revision (ICD-10) Version: 2014 by World Health Organization.

** Multiple responses.

*** Assessed using "The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K10)."

**** Among Female Construction Workers.

***** Assessed only by clinical examination.

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Most prevalent morbidities among Construction Workers were Psychological Distress (43.65%), Generalized Body Pain (20.81%), Hypertension (19.63%), Non-specific Headache (19.63%), Pallor upon clinical examination (18.61%), Non-specific Fever (15.91%), Gastritis (15.57%), Low Back Pain (14.89%) and so on.



Fig. 1. Major Morbluttles among the construction workers

Most prevalent morbidity among the Construction Workers was Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical Findings not classified elsewhere followed by Mental and Behavioural disorders, Diseases of the Musculoskeletal System and so on.

Category*	Frequency	Percent	
Normal (< 120/< 80)	238	40.27	
Pre-Hypertensive (120/80 to 139/89)	237	40.10	
Stage 1 Hypertensive (140/90 to 159/99)	111	18.78	
Stage 2 Hypertensive (≥ 160/≥ 100)	005	00.85	
Total	591	100.00	
Table 2: Distribution of Construction Workers according to Blood Pressure			

* According to JNC VII classification of Hypertension.

Figures in parentheses indicate Blood Pressure range for each category in mm of Hg.

Out of 591 Construction Workers, 5 of them (00.85%) were Stage 2 Hypertensive, 111 of them (18.78%) were Stage 1 Hypertensive, 237 of them (40.10%) were Pre-Hypertensive and 238 of them (40.27%) were Normal upon clinical examination.

Category*	Frequency	Percent	
Underweight (< 18.5)	182	30.80	
Normal (18.5–24.9)	347	58.71	
Overweight (25.0–29.9)	058	09.81	
Obese (≥ 30.0)	004	00.68	
Total	591	100.00	
Table 3: Distribution of Construction Workers according to Body Mass Index			

* According to WHO classification.

Figures in parentheses indicate BMI range for each category in kg/m^2 .

Majority of the Construction Workers [347(58.71%)] had a normal Body Mass Index while 182 of them (30.80%) were underweight and 58 of them (9.81%) were overweight. Only 4 Construction Workers (0.68%) were obese. Mean Body Mass Index of the study subjects was $20.5\pm3.4 \text{ kg/m}^2$.

DISCUSSION:

Major morbidity: In the present study, we found out that the major morbidity at the construction site was Psychological Distress with a prevalence of 43.65%. The study conducted by Adsul BB et.al. ³ shows that the highest morbidity at the construction site was Acute Febrile Illness with a prevalence of 23.11%. Another study done by Gurav RB et.al.⁹ revealed that 60.76% of daily wage labourers were having musculoskeletal disorders as the major health problem.

Hypertension: In the present study, we found out the prevalence of Hypertension among Construction Workers to be 19.63%. Hypertension was prevalent in 3.4% of the workers in the study conducted by Adsul BB et.al.³ A study done by Chataut J, Adhikari RK and Sinha NP¹⁰ shows that the overall prevalence of Hypertension was 22.4% (118 / 527 subjects).

Respiratory Morbidities: In the present study, we found out that the prevalence of respiratory morbidities among the Construction Workers was 22.34%. The study conducted by Rothenbacher D et.al.¹¹ showed that the prevalence of respiratory morbidity among the construction workers was 7.6%. A study done by Seema P et.al.¹² revealed that 26.2% of the cement block workers had respiratory morbidity.

Dermatitis: In the present study, we found out that the prevalence of skin problems among construction workers was 5.41%. The study done by Gurav RB et.al.⁹ revealed that 11.46% of daily wage labourers had skin problems. Another study done by Adsul BB et.al.³ revealed that 4.71% of migrant construction workers had skin problems.

Musculoskeletal problems: In the present study, 24.37% of Construction Workers had diseases of the musculoskeletal system. The study done by Gurav RB et.al.⁹ revealed that 60.76% of daily wage labourers were having musculoskeletal disorders. Another study done by Adsul BB et.al.³ revealed that 5.4% of the construction workers had musculoskeletal problems. The study conducted by Trupti Bodhare, Sameer Valsangkar and Samir Bele¹³ shows that out of 211 construction workers studied, 162 of them (77%) reported symptoms of MSD.

Injuries: In the present study, we found out the prevalence of accidents and injuries among construction workers to be 9.48%. The prevalence of injuries was 5.21% in the study done by Gurav RB et.al.⁹ and 7.9% in the study done by Adsul BB et.al.³

CONCLUSION: In the present study, no Construction Worker below the age of 14 years was found and it was found that the most prevalent morbidities among the Construction Workers were Psychological Distress, Respiratory Morbidity, Musculoskeletal Diseases, Hypertension and Dermatitis. Apart from providing first aid services, personal protective devices and safety measures at the construction sites; periodic general health check-up camps, mobile clinics, referral and followup services and health education activities need to be organized and conducted at the building construction sites on a regular basis. Health Insurance Schemes need to be strengthened. These will ensure health promotion, health protection and maintenance of highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being among the construction workers.

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