

PREVALENCE AND WORK FACTORS OF WORK-RELATED MUSCULOSKELETAL SYMPTOMS IN THE CHINESE CATERING INDUSTRY: A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevalence of work-related musculoskeletal symptoms (WMS) and their relationship with workplace risk factors in the context of the catering industries. It was a territory-wide survey of workers in the catering industries in Hong Kong. The revised Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire (NMQ) was adapted in a three-part questionnaire collecting information on demographic characteristics, WMS, and work factors. The prevalence of WMS was then assessed by both restaurant type and job title. A two-way analysis of variance was used to analyze differences between pain intensity, prevalence, and frequency of movement at work. A total of 902 participants completed the survey. Their average age was 38.03 (SD=11.51). In general, the prevalence of WMS ranged from 11.6% (forearm) to 63.3% (lower back), with an intensity of around 5.0 (Visual Analogue Scale 0-10). The results also show that the most prevalent form of WMS was shoulder pain amongst Chinese chefs (71.7%). Frequency of movement (such as wrist bending and exertion) was the main work-related risk factor contributing to the development of WMS. Based on the study results, it was to conclude that Chinese chefs have a high prevalence rate for WMS in the catering industry. Undesirable work behaviors, such as poor posture, may contribute to their development.

Biography

Andy S K Cheng is an Associate Professor in Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He is also a Registered Occupational Therapist, chartered safety and health practitioner, and certified work capacity evaluator. He was the first Asian recipient of Canadian Institutes of Health Research Scholarship for postgraduate training on the work disability prevention CIHR strategic training program at University of Toronto.

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