

STUDY OF OCCUPATIONAL DISABILITY IN SOME INDUSTRIAL AREAS IN CAIRO

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TO MY HUSBAND

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· INTRODUCTION
&
AIM OF THE WORK

INTRODUCTION

Occupational disability or simply loss of function among workers is a common problem in Egypt. Various types of occupational diseases and occupational accidental injuries produce occupational disabilities.

The adaptation of work to man and each man to his job is one of the simplest principles to prevent accidents and diseases among workers and at the same time, to reach the best use of manpowers (Hunter, 1978).

In many cases, however, the disabled worker recovers completely after the appropriate treatment and returns to his normal occupation without any residual effect on the worker's employability. Sometimes, the disability persists or becomes permanent which is a serious problem of direct concern to the worker, his family and his employer (Hunter, 1978).

It is interesting to mention that every year, there are at least about 9.300.000 temporary disability in the

world (Marcus, 1968) and more than one and half million cases of permanent disability (I.L.O., 1971). Occupational injuries especially the disabling ones, cause much economic waste which is greater than the costs of sickness benefit and medical treatment and hence, they place a considerable burden on society, employees and employers (Marcus, 1968).

Also occupational disability forms a heavy load on the medical care and rehabilitation centres.

Because of the seriousness of the problem of occupational disability and because there was no previous studies about occupational disabilities that occur in Egypt, this study was done in one of the industrial areas in Egypt which is Shobra El-Khema region, trying to evaluate the proper magnitude of this problem among Egyptian workers there and to find out the relationship between occupational disability and some personal factors.

Aims of the study:

This study aims at researching the different causes of occupational disability, to find out the magnitude of this problem and to study the relationship between occupational disability and the personal factors. It also aims at finding out suitable recommendations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

With the increasing industrialization of our environment, occupational disability forms nowadays an important problem in Egypt.

Occupational disabilities are those due to occupational diseases (which are usually of progressive pathologic changes ending in disabling lesions), and occupational non fatal crippling accidents. There are more than one and half million cases of permanent disability every year all over the world as a result of occupational diseases and accidents (I.L.O., 1971).

Although the incidence of occupational diseases is much lower than that of occupational accidental injuries as a result of proper industrial hygienic measures, yet tens of thousands of workers still suffer disablement from occupational diseases which implies that there is a need for intensive efforts to eliminate such diseases, an aim which can be verified in the light of progress in industrial medicine.

There is also an imperative need to take better and more advanced measures to protect workers against accidental injuries and to minimize out the resulting disability and after all to put the proper legislation for suitable compensation and for social security in general.

Of course, occupational disability forms a serious problem as it causes an enormous cost to the productive resources of the countries as most of the disabled employees are of younger age groups than those disabled due to other diseases as cancer and heart diseases (McFarland, 1957).

The problem of disabling injuries due to both occupational diseases and occupational accidents was not investigated in Egypt as all previous researches discussed injuries due to occupational accidents whether disabling or not except few sporadic reports as Shalaby (1980) studied the resulting disablement for inpatient health insured injured workers in Alexandria for only 3 months and found that most of the injuries were

either severe or of moderate severity leading to about 4.3% disability and he reported that such percentage will definitely increase if the duration of the research was increased to be long enough to determine the resulting disablement of all inpatients during longer periods, which makes it certain that occupational disability is a heavy burden affecting the country, employees and employers.

For the last mentioned reasons, such study is done in one of the big industrial areas in Egypt which is Shobra El-Khema region in a trial to investigate the total disabling injuries resulting of both occupational diseases and occupational accidental injuries for all the exposed workers in such industrialized region during the year 1981.

DEFINITIONS & CLASSIFICATIONS:

In no field, definitions are so important than in the field of occupational disability.

To avoid any confusion or misinterpretation, definitions as disability, work injuries, accident, accidental injury and occupational disease, all should be clarified. Since various authors gave different definitions they will all be discussed and the definitions used by the Egyptian laws will be also used in the present work.

Disability:

Kessler (1970) recorded that disability is a negative term in that it refers to an inability or incapacity to meet certain standards of physical efficiency and/or social, occupational or economic responsibility. On the other hand, it was reported by Wood (1980), that disability is any restriction or lack (due to impairment of ability) to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

Also, Howard (1981) recorded that disability means inability to work for pay, and it may be total, where no gainful work is possible, or partial that can be done is limited.

The Egyptian law defined disability as it is the inability of the worker to continue working in his original work or loss of his earning capacity in general. It is either permanent or temporary and it may be one of two: either disability due to disease or disability due to work injury.

The work injury was defined by the National Safety Council (1950) as those which arise out of and in the course of gainful work. This definition is in consistence with the definition of work injury in our Egyptian law.

According to Egyptian law (in the year 1975), the compensable work injury was defined as:

- . Injury by one of the prescribed occupational diseases.