

Hazards on the Job: a Study of OSH Conditions of Selected Self-Employed Workers in Quezon City

Research Paper No. 2016-01



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ISO 9001:2015
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ID 9105081680



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Abstract

The Philippine government acknowledges the importance of the informal sector as a contributor of the economy as well as another source of employment. Being aware of their contributions, the Occupational Safety and Health Center is tasked to conduct a research in identifying the occupational hazards and risks peculiar to the self-employed workers. The intention of this research is to come up with a job hazard matrix of exposures encountered by self-employed workers in their workplaces

A descriptive study was conducted that will evaluate the working and health conditions of selected self-employed workers in Metro Manila. Three sectors were selected from the SSS report entitled "*Moving Towards Inclusive Growth: The Philippine Social Security System*" published in 2015. The selected sectors were jeepney drivers, market vendors, and tricycle drivers within Quezon City. Letters requesting for assistance in coordinating with the target participants were sent to LGUs. Investigators went to marketplaces, jeepney and tricycle terminals to interview market vendors, jeepney and tricycle drivers. Prior informed consent was obtained before the interview. Participants were selected through convenience sampling. Through walkthrough survey around the working environment of target participants, data enumerators were able to record noticeable exposures. Detailed information on their socio-demographic profile was solicited which includes: general data, occupational

history, lifestyle, and social history. Information regarding their health status and health seeking behaviors were also collected.

Forty-eight (48) participants were interviewed composed of 26 market vendors, 8 jeepney drivers, and 14 tricycle drivers through semi-structured interview questionnaire. They are mostly males, 18-30 year old, married, high school graduate, works and average of 11-15 hours a day for 6-7 days a week with a daily income of 400-699 pesos.

Working conditions of selected self-employed workers are poor. Market vendors, jeepney and tricycle drivers are exposed to various hazards, mainly extreme heat, air pollutants, biological agents and ergonomic risk factors in their respective workplaces. These factors plus their low awareness on occupational hazards and poor health seeking behaviors increase their risk of acquiring work-related diseases. Low utilization of SSS benefits can be attributed to low awareness on what illnesses, diseases, or conditions can be applied for compensation.