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Analysis of trends of occupational injury in the Philippines: Implications for policy

This study aimed to review and assess the prevalence and incidence of occupational injuries in the Philippines. Data collection were done from various agencies, namely, Bureau of Labor and Employment Statistics (BLES) of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Labor Force Survey of National Statistics Office, Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC), National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS) under Department of Health (DOH), Overseas Employment Statistics (OES) of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), and International Labor Organization (ILO). Hospital-based surveys and newspaper reports were also sources of data for this study. The review showed that about 358,000 fatal and 337 million non-fatal occupational accidents in the world, and 1.95 million deaths from work-related diseases. Occupational injuries in the Philippines showed 22,265 cases in 2003 and 47,235 cases in 2007. The manufacturing industries registered the highest number of cases out of the reported cases of occupational injuries, 178 resulted in death in 2000, and 116 deaths in 2007. Injury occurred at 6 injury cases per 500 full-time workers or 1 injury case for every 88 workers in 2000. In the following years, it declined to 4 cases per full-time worker in 2003, and 3 cases for every 88 workers in 2007. Superficial injuries and open wounds were the most common type of injuries in 2000, 2003 and 2007. Acute poisoning and infections rapidly increased by 2.39 times from 2003 to 2007. Other serious injuries were burns, corrosions, scalds, and frostbites and still registering with 2,065 cases in 2007. Fractures also registered at 1,839 cases in 2007. Based on hospital records, there was a total of 9,521 injury cases reported for the first quarter of 2010 in 77 government and private hospitals in the country. The cause of injury mostly occurred on the road (44.4%), and work-related injuries were reported at 7.8%. It is suggested that data collection on occupational injuries be a national scale, and not merely randomized collection of data for small, medium and large industries. Data on occupational safety and health should also include the agricultural sector, the informal sector, and small enterprises.

Keywords: Occupational injury; Disabling injuries; Accidents; Disabilities

Biography

Lu is a Research Professor at the National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila; and has published 15 ISI journals related to Occupational and Environmental Health. She is also a University Scientist, and has authored two books on the subject matter.

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