Predictors of upper limb disorders among a public university workers in Malaysia

ABSTRACT

Background: Upper Limb Disorder (ULD) includes a wide range of musculoskeletal diseases and syndromes, which are usually associated with pain and discomfort. The major forms of musculoskeletal disease that account for significant work-related morbidity include upper limb disorders. The main objective of this study was to determine the prevalence and associated factors of upper limb disorders among a public university worker.

Methodology: A cross sectional study design and simple random sampling was used to select six out of fifteen faculties. A total 271 participants were selected from the list of workers name during 20th of May 2014 to 1st of September 2014. Data were collected by face-to-face interview based on standardizes Nordic questionnaire. Weight was measured with a digital (TANITA Weighing Scale) and height by using (SECA206 bodymeter).

Results: The results of this study showed that the response rate was 86%, the prevalence of ULDs among staffs of public university in Malaysia was 67.2% in different body regions, while neck had the highest prevalence 147 (54.2%) and elbows had the lowest prevalence 35 (13%). In addition, significant association were found between ULDs with age, smoking, BMI, exercise and duration of employment (P<0.05). Logistic regression analysis indicated that BMI and exercise were significant predictors of ULDs.

Conclusion: The prevalence of upper limb disorders among public university workers is high (67.2%). The major risk factors responsible for ULDs was BMI and exercise among public university workers, so workers should be educated on how to maintain an optimal BMI through the consumption of appropriate meals and regular exercise recommended in order to prevent ULDs and other related musculoskeletal problems.

Keyword: Upper limb disorders; University workers