

Risk assessment of occupational factors associated with low back pain among healthcare workers in community health clinics in Kota Kinabalu district, Sabah, Malaysia: a prevalence study

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Low back pain is an occupational hazard that can be preventable but disabling, potentially affecting the work performance of healthcare workers. Previous studies have primarily focused on nurses, especially in hospital settings, leaving a gap in our understanding of staff in community health clinics with different work environments. Objectives: To determine the prevalence of low back pain and its associated occupational risk factors among healthcare workers in community health clinics. Methods: A cross-sectional study involving 360 healthcare workers in Kota Kinabalu district collected sociodemographic data, occupational characteristics, low back pain history, and psychological characteristics. Low back pain risk assessment was performed using the Rapid Entire Body Assessment (REBA) and BACKS tool. Results: Among 360 participants, 71.7% reported experiencing low back pain within the past 12 months. Significant associations were found by Chi-Square test between low back pain and the number of children, Body Mass Index (BMI), smoking status, manual handling, awkward postures, assisted lifting of heavy objects, and psychological factors. The findings highlight the high prevalence of LBP among healthcare workers and its association with various occupational factors. Implications for designing specific disease prevention programs to protect healthcare workers are considered, thus enabling them to maintain the highest level of care for the general public.