

أعباء صحية وإصابات غير متكافئة للعمال غير النظاميين في دكا: دراسة تحليلية

تأليف

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مارس 22, 2026

اقتبس من هذا المقال

مدرس الدكتور محمد لوتي (2026). أعباء صحية وإصابات غير متكافئة للعمال غير النظاميين في دكا: دراسة تحليلية. عرب سايكولوجي. تم الاسترجاع من <https://arabpsychology.com/?p=119800>

Imagine spending your days in a factory, the rhythmic clang of machinery a constant companion, knowing that a single misstep could lead to a debilitating injury - and that even without an accident, the work itself is slowly eroding your health. This isn't a dystopian fantasy; it's the daily reality for millions of workers in Bangladesh's informal sector. With a staggering 85% of the country's workforce operating outside the bounds .of formal employment, the scale of this hidden health crisis is immense

منهجية البحث

Researchers at Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) sought to quantify the health challenges faced by these vulnerable workers. Focusing on the Kamrangirchar area of Dhaka, a densely populated urban district, they conducted a detailed retrospective analysis of data collected from two MSF occupational health clinics. The study spanned a decade, from February 2014 to December 2023, and encompassed 23,874 new consultations with available sex data from individuals aged 18 years and older. Unlike studies that follow patients over time, this research looked *backwards* at existing records, allowing for a large sample size and a broad overview of health trends. The team meticulously categorized patient information, including age, sex, the type of factory they worked in (garment, leather, plastics, metal, etc.), the nature of their health complaints, nutritional status, and mental health assessments. Statistical tests, specifically chi-squared tests, were employed to identify significant differences in health outcomes based on these characteristics. The focus on *new* consultations ensured that each record represented a unique individual seeking care for a previously .unaddressed health issue

النتائج

The data revealed a deeply concerning picture of occupational health in Dhaka's informal sector. A total of 64,467 occupational health consultations were recorded over the ten-year period, highlighting the constant demand for medical attention among this workforce. The analysis showed clear gender disparities in the types of work performed. Women were significantly more likely to be employed in the plastics (35.7% compared to 24.4% for men) and garment (28.8% vs. 18.9%) industries, while men dominated the leather sector (17.5% vs. 7.8%). Despite some variation, both men and women overwhelmingly reported operating machinery - 92.8% of men and 91.5% of women. Crucially, an astonishing 90.5% of all clinic visits were .attributed to work-related conditions

Musculoskeletal disorders (problems with muscles, bones, and joints - like back pain or carpal tunnel syndrome) emerged as the most prevalent diagnosis, affecting 30.3% of patients. Gastrointestinal issues (problems with the digestive system) were also remarkably common, accounting for 22.7% of cases. While injuries represented a smaller proportion of consultations overall (4.3%), they were significantly more frequent among men (6.0%) than women (1.8%). Furthermore, a substantial 60% of all injuries occurred within metal factories, pointing to the particularly hazardous conditions in that sector. Nutritional deficiencies were also widespread, affecting 16.7% of men and 12.5% of women. Finally, among the 561 patients assessed for mental health concerns, mood disorders - such as depression and anxiety - were more

.(frequently diagnosed in women (92% vs. 84% in men

دلالات

The findings from this MSF study underscore the urgent need for comprehensive interventions to protect the health and well-being of workers in Bangladesh's informal sector. The sheer volume of work-related illnesses and injuries demonstrates that current safety standards are woefully inadequate. The gender-specific patterns observed - with women concentrated in certain industries and experiencing higher rates of mood disorders - highlight the importance of tailoring interventions to address the unique vulnerabilities of female workers. The prevalence of musculoskeletal disorders and gastrointestinal problems suggests a need for improved ergonomic design in workplaces and better access to basic sanitation and hygiene facilities. The high incidence of injuries in metal factories demands targeted safety training and the enforcement of stricter safety regulations.

Researchers emphasize that simply providing medical care is not enough. A preventative approach, focused on improving working conditions and addressing the underlying social determinants of health, is essential. The study's authors advocate for the ratification of International Labour Organization Conventions C189 and C190, which aim to extend the same protections to informal workers as those enjoyed by their counterparts in the formal sector. These conventions represent a crucial step towards ensuring that all workers, regardless of their employment status, have the right to a safe and healthy working environment. Ultimately, safeguarding the rights and well-being of these workers is not only a matter of social justice but also a vital component of sustainable economic development in Bangladesh.

Reference

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DOI: [10.1186/s12889-025-26046-0](https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-025-26046-0)