

Knowledge and Socio-demographic determinants of occupational hazard prevention among automobile mechanics in Akure South Local Government, Ondo State, Nigeria

*Elemile M.G.¹, Kio J.O.², Abolarin I.O.³, Makanjuola O.J.⁴

Abstract

Objective: The study aimed at assessing the knowledge and socio-demographic determinants on occupational hazard prevention among automobile mechanics in Akure South Local Government (AKSLG), Ondo State, Nigeria.

Methods: Descriptive cross-sectional design was utilized with automobile mechanic serving as the study population. Respondents were selected by stratified random sampling technique. The study population included 231 respondents from 13 units within the AKSLG. Self-developed questionnaire was administered for data collection. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and Regression model at $p < 0.05$

Results: Participants' age ranged between 20-50 years and majority had above 15 years of experience with monthly income **above ₦58,000 (\$161)**. The findings revealed that most (62.0%) of the respondents had fair knowledge of occupational hazard. Also, 38.0% of the respondents had poor knowledge on the prevention of occupational hazard. Significant relationship was found between years of experience; knowledge about occupational hazard prevention and occupational hazard prevention among respondents with p-values of 0.005 and 0.007 respectively.

Conclusion: Socio-demographic variable of years of experience and knowledge of automobile mechanics about occupational hazards prevention had significant relationship on prevention of occupational hazards, therefore measures to enhance knowledge about occupational hazards should be implemented to improve occupational hazard prevention among automobile mechanics.

Keywords: Automobile mechanics, Knowledge, Occupational hazard Prevention, Akure

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Received: July 15, 2019

Accepted: September 21, 2019

Published: September 30, 2019

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<http://dx.doi.org/10.4314/rejhs.v7i3.8>

Connaissances et déterminants sociodémographiques de la prévention des risques professionnels chez les mécaniciens automobiles du gouvernement local d'Akure Sud, État d'Ondo, Nigéria

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Abstrait

Objectif: L'étude visait à évaluer les connaissances et les déterminants sociodémographiques sur la prévention des risques professionnels chez les mécaniciens automobiles du gouvernement local d'Akure Sud (AKSLG), dans l'État d'Ondo, au Nigéria.

Méthodes: Une conception transversale descriptive a été utilisée avec un mécanicien automobile servant de population d'étude. Les répondants ont été sélectionnés par une technique d'échantillonnage aléatoire stratifié. La population étudiée comprenait 231 répondants de 13 unités de l'AKSLG. Un questionnaire auto-développé a été administré pour la collecte de données. Les données ont été analysées à l'aide de statistiques descriptives, d'une corrélation de Pearson et d'un modèle de régression à $p < 0,05$.

Résultats: L'âge des participants variait entre 20 et 50 ans et la majorité avait plus de 15 ans d'expérience avec un revenu mensuel supérieur à 58 000 ,000 (161 \$). Les résultats ont révélé que la plupart (62,0%) des répondants connaissaient assez bien les risques professionnels. En outre, 38,0% des répondants avaient une connaissance insuffisante de la prévention des risques professionnels. Une relation significative a été trouvée entre les années d'expérience; connaissances sur la prévention des risques professionnels et sur la prévention des risques professionnels chez les répondants avec des valeurs p de 0,005 et 0,007 respectivement.

Conclusion: La variable sociodémographique des années d'expérience et des connaissances de la mécanique automobile en matière de prévention des risques professionnels avait une relation significative en matière de prévention des risques professionnels. Par conséquent, des mesures visant à améliorer la connaissance des risques professionnels devraient être mises en œuvre afin d'améliorer la prévention des risques professionnels chez les mécaniciens automobiles.

Mots-clés: Mécanique automobile, Connaissance, Prévention des risques professionnels, Akure

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INTRODUCTION

Automobile mechanics face many hazards in their work environment, and these hazards have the potential to cause injury or illness. Automobile service industry has a large group of workers many of which are in the unorganized sector (1). The numerous activities they are involved in exposes them to many physical and chemical agents that could be harmful to their wellbeing. These artisans are also disposed to accidents and injuries in the workplace, most of which could be prevented (2). The workers in the automobile repair industry are made up of a large number of people involved in vocational commercial activities in Nigeria (3). The workers when engaged in their work come in contact with several vulnerabilities which exposes the workers to various well-being challenges which may oftentimes be serious and incapacitating. Being exposed to lead in the workplace occurs often with motor vehicle artisans and is responsible for 0.9% of total universal well-being burden with most of the cases emerging from third world countries (3). One of the harmful habits which is common among auto technicians is the withdrawal of fuel from the car tanks with the use of their mouth using a pipe. Other habits include the application of diesel to injured body parts and carrying out most activities in poor hygienic settings and using premium motor spirit to rinse hands and parts of vehicles.

The occurrence of occupational hazards is a consequence of physical, chemical, social, biological, and psycho-social factors which occurs at work where workers come in contact with when employed (1). World Health Organization (WHO), exposed that low state of wellbeing as a result of work activities and reduction in the employee's ability to work might lead to commercial forfeiture up to 10-20% of the gross national product (GNP) of a nation. Worldwide, workplace fatalities and morbidity are responsible for a projected forfeiture of four percent of the Gross Domestic Product (4). A study which was done in 2007/2008 by Health and Safety Executive on work-related diseases projected thirty four million working days which are lost, twenty eight million due to work-related ailments and 6 million due to place of work accidents (4). The incidence of work-place hazards and illnesses are growing in third world nations. Estimation of the occurrence of above one hundred and twenty million mishaps had occurred in the working environment with the prevalence of over two hundred thousand deaths annually each year in third world countries (5)

Amfo and Agyemang (6), projected approximately 270 million employees become targets of work-related hazards and 160 million are afflicted by work-related diseases yearly. Amfo and Agyemang also described that the prevalence of work-related injuries was around 11.5 wounds/1,000 individuals in the municipal zones besides 44.9/1,000 in the countryside areas amongst these workforces yearly in Ghana. These automobile mechanics are unprotected to numerous dangers in the proximity of their occupational settings such as asbestos, mineral oils, solvents, paint pigments, anticorrosive ingredients and automobile exhaust. The upsurge in automobile knowledge has come along with more risk, exposing these technicians to fatal work place hazards (6).

In modern societies like Nigeria, automobiles are considered as an integral part which are known as the source of environmental pollutants which are very poisonous to man (7). Automobile mechanics are expected to avoid the use of toxic compounds which could be harmful to the wellbeing of man when repairing vehicles (8). The spraying of commonly used chemicals such as nitrocellulose thinner, polyisocyanates and other hydrocarbons are the most effective ways to apply thinners, penetrating oils and cleaners to get to parts of the vehicle which have odd shapes and is often had to get to parts of a vehicle (9). Paradoxically, the ease of application of the substances is the factor that makes them get to the air and easily be inhaled into the breathing system of man (10). Although different individuals have different sensitivity, reactivity and irritation levels to the chemicals, even at poor concentrations, many solvents and solids in paints have specific threshold limit values, thus different exposure values and guidelines require controlled exposure monitoring to establish the appropriate and effective protection methods (11).

Workers involved in small and medium commercial activities have been shown to be more vulnerable to work-related accidents (2). A study among automobile technicians in India reported that half of them were not aware of the health complications that is related with their exposure to work-related activities and thereby the application of personal protection equipment was very poor. Moreover, none of them were formally educated on occupational environment safety (12). The use of personal protective equipment had also been reported to be very poor by several other studies even among the workers in formal small-scale industries. Some groups

of workers have been reported not to know much about such hazards and to have little or no training on workplace safety (11).

Monney (13) also reported that workplace injuries which results in deaths, morbid hazards at the place of work in some situations, condemn victims with forfeiture of some parts of the body, skin infections, complications involving the muscles and skeleton, procreation, uncontrollable growth of body cells, psychological and nervous system illnesses, respiratory and heart ailments. The study therefore assessed the knowledge and socio-demographic determinant of occupational hazards prevention among automobile mechanics in Akure, Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

A cross-sectional study design was adopted to assess the socio-demographic variables and knowledge on the prevention of occupational hazard among automobile mechanics in Akure South Local Government.

Area of the Study

This study was carried in Akure the Capital City of Ondo State in South Western Nigeria with a population of more than 420,594 people in 2019 (14)

Population

The study population was Automobile Mechanics in Akure South Local Government which were divided into clusters known as Units. Their unit names are Adeboyejo, Asaolu, Afolabi, Dijon, Jomo, Osho-oja, Odesanmi, all these locations have number of 30 mechanics each, Ogunleye, Ojuenimala, Olasode and Yaya have 40, Olamirinkiri 50 and Olayemi have 20 members, These Units are thirteen in number, which are privately operated and consists of 440 members.

Sample Size Determination

The Cochran (15), sample size formula given as

$$n = \frac{z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

was applied to determine the sample size for the study with prevalence, (0.08) being the use of overalls by automobile mechanics in an earlier research (16) z of 1.96, sampling error set at 5%, and 10% to accommodate attrition. A sample size of 384 was determined, but due to the fact the study population of 440 was less than 10,000, the version of the Cochran formula

$$n_f = n / (1 + (n-1)N^{-1})$$

was utilized. The sample size n_f of 225 was obtained and 10% of the calculated value was added to account for attrition making a total of 248 as the sample size.

Data collection

Collection of data was achieved by the researchers from 3rd of March to April 30th 2019. Using structured questionnaire which was divided into three sections which assessed the socio-demographic characteristics, knowledge of occupational hazards and prevention among the respondents. The Chairman of the automobile mechanics of Akure South Local Government provided a list of all automobile mechanics with their units name and their workshop addresses. Two hundred and fort eight structured questionnaires were administered to registered mechanics who were selected by stratified random sampling, out of which two hundred and thirty one (231) were filled and returned. Data was obtained from the respondents in their respective shops over a period of 7 weeks and the questionnaire were administered. This was conducted along with other researchers. The knowledge level was classified as "Poor below 30%, Fair 30-60% and Good above 60%".

Validation and the reliability of the instrument

The questionnaire was given to an expert in the field of Nursing Science and a Statistician who determined the content and the face validity of the instrument, the identified corrections were effected. The tool was pre-tested on 24 road side automobile mechanics working in the city outside the study area to ensure adequate reliability of the instrument. The reliability score was 0.84 using Cronbach alpha.

Data Analysis

Data retrieved were evaluated using descriptive and inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation and Regression model. The data was analyzed at P = 0.05 level of significant using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.

Ethical consideration: Ethical clearance was obtained from Babcock University Health Research Ethical Committee (BUHREC) and permission was also obtained from the Chairman of the National Automobile Technician Association (NATA). Permission was also sought from the Leadership of the automobile mechanics' of each unit and documented

permission was retrieved from the participants to obtain their informed consent.

RESULTS

Demographic data of respondents

Table 1 refers to the socio-demographic variables of respondents. A total number of 231 automobile mechanics participated in the study. Majority of the respondents 80(34.6%) were within age 21years to 30years, all of the respondents 231(100%) were male, more of the respondents 50(21.6%) had between 1year to 5years working experience as an automobile mechanic, more of the respondents 106(44.6%) had Junior Secondary School Education and more of the respondents 50(21.6%) had Monthly income level of above ₦58,000.

Table 2 reveals that majority 62% of respondents had fair knowledge level regarding occupational hazard. The table also reveals the mean score on knowledge about occupational hazard among respondents was 7.12 with standard deviation of 1.32 with a range of 5.80 to 8.44.

Table 3 shows that physical hazard 93(40.3%) occasionally occur more frequently among respondents, chemical hazard 99(42.9%) rarely occur more frequently among respondents, electrical hazard 84(36.4%) rarely occur more frequently among respondents and mechanical hazard 111(48.1%) rarely occur more frequently among respondents.

Table 4 shows the relationship between knowledge about occupational hazard and occupational hazard prevention. The table revealed there was a significant relationship between knowledge about prevention of occupational hazard and occupational hazard prevention among respondents with a p value of 0.007.

Table 5 shows a multiple regression which was carried out to investigate whether year of experience, income and educational qualification could significantly predict participants' knowledge of occupational hazard prevention. The results of the regression indicated that the model explained 3.5% of the variance and that the model was a significant predictor of knowledge of occupational hazard prevention, $F(3,227)$ having a value of 2.762 and p value of 0.043. While year of experience contributed significantly to the model (B at 0.240 and p value of 0.005), both income (B at 0.033, p value of 0.639) and educational qualifications did not (B at .050; p value of 0.619). The final predictive model was: Knowledge of

occupational hazard prevention was expressed as $22.238 + (-.240*\text{years of experience}) + (.033*\text{income}) + (.050*\text{educational qualifications})$

DISCUSSION

Knowledge about Occupational Hazards

The findings from this study showed that majority (61.9%) of the respondents had fair knowledge about occupational hazard. This finding disagreed with a previous descriptive study conducted by (17) in which majority of the respondents had good knowledge level about occupational hazards. The finding in this study also seems to be at contrast with (18) who reported that the knowledge level of occupational hazards was good among respondents. The reason adduced for the differences in knowledge levels could be attributed to respondent's level of education as majority of the mechanics have secondary school level of education. It has been established that a person's level of education could positively affect the knowledge level (9). In congruent with this findings from (16) reported in their study conducted at Edo State that majority (92.7%) of the respondents had good knowledge of physical hazards. Furthermore, this contrast the study by (5), findings which reported that knowledge on occupational hazards among automobile artisan in Kathmandu were low with 56%.

Occurrence of Occupational Hazards

The results from the research work indicated that the occupational hazard that occur regularly by the mechanics were 22.9, 10.0 and 6.1% for physical hazards, chemical hazards and electrical hazards respectively. The findings agreed with previous descriptive study conducted by (7) and (2) who also reported that physical hazards such as burns occur most frequently among respondents. This is also agrees with the results of a study carried out by (13) in big cities of Ghana, in which ailments affecting the muscles and bones, a form of physical hazard was the most common work-related illness. The reason could be attributed to the uncomfortable positions they are constrained to adopt during the course of their work. Also based on the level of technological advancement in Nigeria, the level of power supply was abysmally poor so most of the tools being utilized were basic tools. In further to this, (3) stated that the most health problems experienced included cuts, (84.4%) and low back pain of 78%, bruises of 72%, all these are grouped under physical hazards which is also

in agreement with this findings.

Relationship between Socio-demographic variables and Occupational Hazards

Significant relationship was found between socio-demographic variables and occupational hazard prevention among respondents, variables such as the years of experience to be significantly influence on occupational hazards prevention while educational qualification and monthly income were found to have no significant influence on occupational hazard prevention. This could be ascribed to the fact that it has been established that as years of experience increases more knowledge is gained about the prevention of occupation hazard (1). Also the outcome of the study also disagrees with the findings of (19) which stated that educational attainment is directly proportional to the level of understanding of occupational hazards prevention, this might be attributed to the fact that education makes one to be more informed about issues in the environment (2). On the issue of monthly income, the findings of the study disagrees with (3), who stated that the higher monthly income of an automobile mechanic increases the ability to purchase PPE, the years of experience variables therefore have a significant influence on the prevention of occupational hazard. This finding agrees with the previous descriptive study conducted by (1, 3) in which socio-demographic variable was found to be significantly related with occupational hazard prevention.

CONCLUSION

From the study, it was observed that most of the automobile mechanics had fair knowledge about occupational hazards and prevention of occupational hazards. Physical hazard occurred more frequently among respondents while chemical, electrical and mechanical hazards rarely occur more frequently among respondents. It is thereby concluded that the respondents' knowledge about occupational hazard, knowledge about prevention of occupational hazard, socio-demographic variables had a significant influence on occupational hazard prevention among the respondents.

Recommendations

Government should collaborate with the Leadership of Automobile Mechanics' Associations to develop training regimes and bring up appropriate strategies to enhance automobile mechanics' knowledge about

occupational hazards and their prevention which would enhance the prevention of occupational hazards as a practice.

Acknowledgement: the authors appreciate the trained research assistants selected for data collection, among Students Nurses of the Institute of Professional Nurses and Midwives Educator (IPNME) of the University of Medical Sciences (UNIMED), Ondo State.

Conflict of interests: No conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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Table 1: Frequency and percentage showing socio-demographic data of respondents

Socio-demographic variable	Respondents n=231	Frequency (%)
Age	Below 20years	38 (16.5)
	21-30years	80 (34.6)
	31-40years	39 (16.9)
	41-50years	64 (27.7)
	Above 50years	10 (4.3)
Gender	Male	231 (100)
	Female	0 (0)
Years of Experience	Below 1year	7 (3)
	1-5years	50 (21.6)
	6-10years	32 (13.9)
	11-15years	48 (20.8)
	Above 15years	94 (40.7)
Educational Qualification	No Formal Education	10 (4.3)
	Primary Education	42 (18.2)
	Junior Secondary Education	106 (45.9)
	Senior Secondary Education	71 (30.7)
	Tertiary education	2 (0.9)
Monthly Income Level	Below N18,000	21 (9.1)
	N18,000 - N27,000	29 (12.6)
	N28,000 - N37,000	44 (19)
	N38,000 - N47,000	46 (19.9)
	N48,000 - N57,000	41 (17.7)
	Above N58,000	50 (21.6)

Table 2: Knowledge level about occupational hazard among respondents.

Level of Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage %	Mean	Standard Deviation
Good knowledge (60-100%)	46	19.9	7.12	1.32
Fair knowledge (30-59%)	143	61.9		
Poor knowledge (0-29%)	42	18.2		
Total (%)	231	100.0		

Table 3: Level of occurrence of occupational hazard among respondents

Variable	Category N (%)			
	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Regularly
Physical Hazard	27(11.7)	58(25.1)	93(40.3)	53(22.9)
Chemical Hazard	29(12.6)	99(42.6)	80(34.6)	23(10.0)
Electrical Hazard	59(25.5)	84(36.4)	74(32.0)	14(6.1)

Table 4: Relationship between Knowledge about prevention of occupational hazard and occupational hazard prevention among respondents

Variable	Test Statistics	Occupational Hazard Prevention	Knowledge about prevention of Occupational Hazard
Occupational Hazard Prevention	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-Tailed) N	1 231	0.204* 0.007 231
Knowledge about prevention of occupational hazard	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-Tailed) N	0.204* 0.007 231	1 231

Table 5: Relationship between socio-demographic variables and occupational hazard prevention among respondents

Variables	N	B	R ²	Sig	df	F	Sig
Regression					3		
Residual					227		
Years of experience	231	-0.240	0.035	0.005		2.762	0.043
Income		0.033		0.639			
Educational qualifications		0.050		0.619			

Correlation Constant value = 22.238