

Are There Different Perceptions of Ergonomic Programs Between Managers And Workers In Construction?

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Abstract: Work-related musculoskeletal injuries and disorders are among the most frequently reported causes of lost or restricted work time in construction. Ergonomics is still a relatively new theme for the construction industry. The purpose of the study is to identify the similarities and differences of the workers' and managers' perceptions of ergonomics matters in construction. A survey questionnaire was developed and distributed to both workers and management personnel employed by sixteen different construction contractors and trades. The final questionnaire comprised of a total of forty questions and consisted of four major sections: background, safety and ergonomic programs, injuries and illnesses, and work conditions. Eighty-eight managers and workers completed the survey questionnaire. Almost all of their employer had a written safety program, whereas only one-third had an ergonomic program. Ergonomics was perceived as relatively less essential compared to the safety in construction. Managers were more likely to think that management encourages feedback from site employees than were workers. Managers appeared to be more likely to know that their companies have an ergonomic training program or policy than were workers. Workers were more likely to consider to purchase or select the ergonomic hand tools than were managers. Construction workers and managers alike reported having slight regard for the potential occurrence of a work-related musculoskeletal disorder. Understanding the similarities and differences of the workers' and managers' perceptions of ergonomic matters can play an important role to develop and implement effective ergonomic programs and policies in construction.