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2) TOPIC OF THE PROJECT : FACTORS AFFECTING MENTAL HEALTH , SUICIDAL ISSUES , AND THEIR PREVENTION IN CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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INTRODUCTION

Over the years, the stigma around mental health has started to diminish, with many industries making an effort to raise awareness and offer support. Mental health in the workplace is important in any industry, and companies have shown significant progress in promoting and supporting a healthier work environment. Unfortunately, mental illness still greatly impacts the construction workforce.

According to a study conducted by Construction Industry Rehabilitation Plan (CIRP), 83% of construction workers have struggled with mental health issues. On top of that, suicide rates have skyrocketed over the years due to the negative stigma associated with mental health in the construction sector.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic struck and lockdown came into effect, employees in all manner of industries have suffered from mental health issues. The construction industry is no different and, in fact, suicide rates among some construction workers are three times the national average. With mental health concerns on the rise in the wake of COVID-19, the construction industry needs to raise awareness about this epidemic to minimize the risks associated with mental illnesses. Mental health and well-being are high priorities for organizations across industries. This was true before COVID-19, however, is even more so now. Growing mental health concerns exist in the construction industry because it ranks second highest in suicide rates among major industries. Research shows that up to 90% of people who die by suicide have a mental health condition. Depression is the most common, however other conditions may impact suicide rates including substance use disorders — most commonly alcohol misuse, anxiety, and trauma.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this work is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the factors affecting mental health and to research mental health outreach programs. By identifying the various influences on mental health, including biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors, we aim to develop a holistic perspective on mental well-being. Additionally, through researching existing mental health outreach programs, we seek to evaluate their effectiveness, identify best practices and explore innovative approaches that can improve mental health awareness, support and access to services. This work aims to contribute to the development of evidence based interventions and initiatives that promote positive mental health outcomes and reduce the stigma surrounding mental health.

METHODOLOGY

The literature review analyzed to develop relevant questions for the questionnaire with the aim of exploring the thoughts and feelings of construction professionals and discovering what health and well-being strategies are being implemented in their workplace. For this study, a structured multiple-choice questionnaire containing only closed questions was generated using Google Forms. Questions were answered using a 5-point Likert scale of strongly agree/agree/neutral/disagree/strongly disagree. The survey questionnaire consisted of 30 questions. The questionnaire was sent out through email and hard-copy questionnaire to construction professionals.

The methodology for the research involves following steps :

1. Research Objective
2. Literature Review
3. Questionnaire Design
4. Pilot Testing
5. Data Collection
6. Data Analysis
7. Data Interpretations

RESULT AND CONCLUSION

The questionnaire was sent to a small group of construction industry professionals to assess its clarity, completeness and relevance. Collected feedback from participants and made necessary revisions to improve the questionnaire's effectiveness.

Further the questionnaire is sent to the construction industry professionals for the collection of data. Data collection is in progress and the same shall be tabulated in the following report.

SCOPE OF FUTURE WORK

- I. In depth exploration : Conduct qualitative research to gain deeper insights into the identified factors. Explore the lived experiences, perceptions and perspectives of construction workers regarding mental health and safety, qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups can provide a rich understanding of the complexities involved.
- II. Comparative Analysis : Compare the findings from the construction industry with other industry to identify commonalities and differences in the factors affecting mental health and safety . explore transferable best practices and interventions that can be adapted from other sectors.

By exploring these areas of future work, researchers and practitioners can contribute to a better understanding of the factors affecting mental health and safety in the construction industry and develop evidence- based strategies to create healthier and safe work environments.
