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EVALUATION OF WORK RELATED MUSCULOSKELETAL PAIN AND SLEEP HYGIENE AMONG IT PROFESSIONALS IN PONDICHERRY

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Background: Work-related musculoskeletal disorders (WRMSDs) and poor sleep hygiene are emerging as major occupational health concerns among IT professionals due to prolonged sitting, repetitive tasks, improper posture, and suboptimal workstation ergonomics. These factors contribute to chronic pain, fatigue, and sleep disturbances, ultimately affecting productivity and quality of life. Despite the rapid growth of the IT sector, region-specific data on these issues remain limited.

Purpose: To evaluate the prevalence and severity of work-related musculoskeletal pain and sleep hygiene patterns among IT professionals in Pondicherry, and to determine the influence of years of experience (<5 vs. >5 years) and gender on these outcomes.

Methods and Materials: This analytical descriptive study included 140 IT professionals from Lumina Datamatics Limited, Puducherry, selected through randomized sampling. Participants were divided into Group A (n=70, <5 years experience) and Group B (n=70, >5 years experience). Data were collected over six months using the Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire (NMQ) and the Sleep Hygiene Index (SHI). Statistical analysis was performed using unpaired t-tests with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: A high prevalence of musculoskeletal discomfort was observed in both groups, particularly in the neck and lower back. No significant difference was found between Group A and Group B in NMQ scores ($p = 0.34$) or SHI scores ($p = 0.47$), indicating similar levels of pain and sleep issues regardless of experience. However, females reported significantly higher musculoskeletal pain than males ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: WRMSDs and poor sleep hygiene are prevalent among IT professionals irrespective of experience. Early workplace interventions, including ergonomic training, postural correction, and sleep education, are essential to improve health and productivity.

Keywords: Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WRMSDs), Sleep Hygiene, IT Professionals, Nordic Musculoskeletal Questionnaire (NMQ), Sleep Hygiene Index (SHI), Ergonomics.