

32 Title	<b>Psychosocial and physical work environment factors at three workplaces dealing with materials handling</b>
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Abstract	<p>The aim of the study was to increase the empirically based knowledge of factors influencing the perceived musculoskeletal discomfort among workers in the field of materials handling. Recent research has shown that not only the physical, but also the psychosocial work environment can influence the perception of musculoskeletal discomfort. The survey was carried out in three retailing shops, to a large extent dealing with materials handling. Three different sets of questions were used measuring psychosocial work climate, perceived musculoskeletal discomfort, and perceived physical workload. The data obtained was statistically analysed to evaluate whether there were any relations between the different work environment factors. The correlation between some psychosocial factors and Work Load Index, suggests that a higher level of workload correlates with a less satisfactory psychosocial work environment. This is especially true for the psychosocial factors <i>Psychological workload</i> and <i>Influence on and control over work</i>. The results revealed no strong correlations or differences in musculoskeletal discomfort neither in groups scoring low nor in groups scoring high on psychosocial factors. On the other hand, background factors, such as number of working hours per week and sex, seemed to influence the musculoskeletal discomfort. In order to further develop the study design, it might be necessary to improve the quantification of the workload measure and to separate musculoskeletal discomfort caused in other environments from that caused by the work environment studied.</p>