The Impact of Early Fatherhood on Men’s Safety at Work.

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CHAPTER FOUR

The Likelihood of Work Hours, Physical Intensity of Work, EDS, Fatigue of Men during Early Fatherhood

The Contributions of WFC, EDS, and Fatigue to the Work Safety Behaviour in Working men during Early Fatherhood

The relationships between WFC, EDS, Fatigue, and Safety Behaviour

The relationships between Independent Demographic Variables, WFC, EDS, Fatigue, and Safety Behaviour of First-Time and Subsequent Father.

The Work-Related Incidents of Men during Early Fatherhood

The Work Safety Behaviour of Men during Early Fatherhood

Excessive Daytime Sleepiness (EDS) during Early Fatherhood

Work-Family Conflict (WFC) in Early Fatherhood

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The Work Safety Behaviour of Men during Early Fatherhood

The Work-Related Incidents of Men during Early Fatherhood

Differences in WFC, EDS and Fatigue, and Safety Behaviour of First-Time and Subsequent Father.

The relationships between Independent Demographic Variables, WFC, EDS

and Fatigue in Working Men during Early Fatherhood

The relationships between WFC, EDS, Fatigue, and Safety Behaviour in Working men during Early Fatherhood

The Contributions of WFC, EDS, and Fatigue to the Work Safety Behaviour of Men during Early Fatherhood

The Likelihood of Work Hours, Physical Intensity of Work, EDS, Fatigue

and Work Safety Behaviour to predict Work-Related Incidents in Men
Statement of Authorship

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma. No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of this thesis. This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

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Abbreviations

ABS – Australian Bureau of Statistics
EDS – Excessive Daytime Sleepiness
ESS – Epworth Sleepiness Scale
FAS – Fatigue Assessment Scale
FIW - Family Impact on Work
MRA – Multiple Regression Analysis
OHN – Occupational Health Nurse
OH&S – Occupational Health and Safety
T1 – Time period 1 (6 weeks)
T2 – Time period 2 (12 weeks)
WFC – Work Family Conflict
WIF – Work Impact on Family
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Abstract

This study explores the impact of known risk factors on health and safety at work in men in early fatherhood. Becoming a father is a major challenge, for men have to face and balance two of the most central responsibilities in adult life, those of work and family. Research and literature has shown that employed fathers work longer than ever before, and that society expects fathers to increase their role in parenting activities. Engaging in long work hours and parenting might create work-family conflict, excessive daytime sleepiness and fatigue. The collective effect of which might impact on the father’s safety behaviour at work. Currently, no research has been located that identifies the relationship between these variables and work safety behaviours.

A descriptive survey method was used to investigate known risk factors of work family conflict, excessive daytime sleepiness and fatigue in working men in early fatherhood and their relationship with safety behaviour at work. Fathers were recruited via antenatal and postpartum maternity services in the Gold Coast region of Queensland and Northern New South Wales, Australia, resulting in a convenience sample of 241 fathers. A questionnaire was sent to participating fathers during the first 3 months of their baby’s life, at 6 weeks and 12 weeks. The questionnaire utilised previously published scales that measure work family conflict, excessive daytime sleepiness, fatigue and safety behaviour at work. To gain an indication of accidents experienced during the first 3 months postpartum, a researcher-developed scale was used to measure participants’ self-reported history of workplace related incidents (incidents at work or driving to and from work).
This study revealed that working men during early fatherhood worked long hours at work and took very little parental leave after the birth of their baby. Furthermore, a large proportion of participants reported having work family conflict, excessive daytime sleepiness and fatigue. Inferential data analysis confirmed a statistically significant increase in work family conflict, excessive daytime sleepiness, and fatigue at 6 and 12 weeks, and a decrease in safety behaviour at 6 and 12 weeks. Moreover, subsequent fathers scored higher in work family conflict, excessive daytime sleepiness and fatigue than first-time fathers. Fatigue was the most significant contributor to safety behaviour at 6 and 12 weeks, and physical exertion at work significantly predicted the reporting of work-related incident at 6 and 12 weeks.

The results of this study provide a better understanding of the factors that impact on the work safety of men during early fatherhood and the risk factors they face in meeting both work and family commitments. What is more, the results of the study have clinical significance to midwives, community nurses and occupational health nurses in relation to their clinical practice and client education. The study also provides a basis for further investigation into the health and safety of men during early fatherhood as they balance work and family.