

ABSTRACT

Introduction and Background: Welders are usually faced with various occupational hazards at their work places. These hazards adversely affect their health and productivity. However, there is little known on the prevalence of occupational health and safety hazards in Soroti Municipality Soroti District, Eastern Uganda. This study assessed the prevalence of occupational health and safety hazards among welders in Soroti Municipality, Eastern Uganda.

Objective: To assess the prevalence of occupational health and safety hazards among welders in Soroti Municipality, Uganda.

Methodology: A cross-sectional study utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods was done on 250 welders and their apprentices within Soroti Municipality in Soroti district. The study provided information on social-economic demographics, occupational health hazards faced, level of awareness of occupational hazards and safety measures used by the welders in Soroti Municipality.

Results: A total of 245 (98%) were male aged between 26-35 years old, only 5.2% were illiterate. The common hazards faced by welders included heat 127(23.2%), noise 121(22.1%), and electric shock 64(11.7%). In the past one year 245 (98%) of the welders suffered injuries, and injuries commonly sustained by the welders were cuts (27.7%), burns (19.1%) and eye injuries (19.0%). Two hundred and forty (96%) were aware that their jobs were hazardous. Personal protective wear used by the welders were goggles (46.6%), gloves (25.5%) and boots (16.6%). Only 4.6% used recommended goggles.

Conclusion and Recommendation: Over three quarters of the welders sustained work-related injuries and their level of awareness was high in Soroti Municipality. They frequently protected their eyes with ordinary sun glasses which were not recommended for welding activities. There is need to further increase the awareness of PPE usage to protect the whole body from accidents and injuries through sensitization.