

Workplace Environment of Burmese Migrant Workers

Abstract

This survey examines the workplace environment of Burmese migrants in Phang Nga province in southern Thailand. The survey consisted of 61 multiple-choice questions and was completed by 101 Burmese migrants. It was divided into five main parts: Demographics, illness & injury, workplace safety, emergency situations and children at the workplace.

Analysis shows that Burmese migrant workers are subjected to dangerous conditions in which their labor rights granted under Thai law are not upheld (e.g. maximum working hours, maternity leave). Workers also tend to have high rates of illnesses (81% claimed to be ill either a few times a year or a few times a month) and susceptibility to injury is high (49% have been injured at work)—factors that may be the result of insufficient safety protocols (90% never received safety procedural training) and lack of safety gear (23% of workers in hazardous industries are not provided with any safety gear). Additionally, there are tensions among workers, as is exhibited by the excessive violence that occurs on worksites (81% of workers said that sometimes violence or fighting occurred at work). There are many issues that Burmese migrant workers face at work; many of which can be ameliorated if employers uphold rights and improve workplace safety.

In order to improve the situation of Burmese migrant workers, workers, non-profit organizations and other concerned parties should put pressure on employers to enforce labor laws. If employers are held accountable for the health and safety of their workers at the workplace (e.g. if they have to pay for medical costs for the treatment of injuries sustained at the workplace) it is likelier that they will protect their workers and contribute to their health by enforcing more reasonable working hours and stricter regulations regarding safety gear. Additional measures such as the provision of day-care for children would also be helpful in upholding children's safety. These measures are likely to reduce injuries that easily can be prevented as well as improve the overall working conditions.

Objective

The purpose of this survey is to assess the conditions endured by Burmese migrant workers so that it will be possible to improve their work environment. Limited research has been conducted on workplace conditions and the experiences of Burmese migrants in southern Thailand. In local lingo, the jobs done by Burmese migrants are referred to as the 3Ds (dangerous, dirty and demeaning)¹. The main occupations of Burmese migrants are: work on rubber tree plantations, construction sites, domestic work, shrimp shearing and as fishermen. A better understanding of the needs of the workers allows for improvement of the workplace environment.

Methodology

The survey instrument consisted of 61 multiple-choice questions. Some questions were aimed at particular target groups (e.g. females, people that work with pesticides, etc.) They were designed in English based on other relevant surveys, and revised after feedback and pilot surveys. The survey was then translated into Burmese. A total of 101 Burmese migrant workers in southern Thailand participated in the survey. The Foundation for Education and Development (FED) used staff from their health team, community health workers, teachers and librarians to collect data from workers in communities throughout Phang Nga and surrounding provinces of southern Thailand. The surveyors randomly selected workers from their homes in their respective communities. Because of the high rates of illiteracy, all questions and answer options were read out loud to the participants. The FED staff members recorded all the workers' answers and also wrote any necessary additional notes.

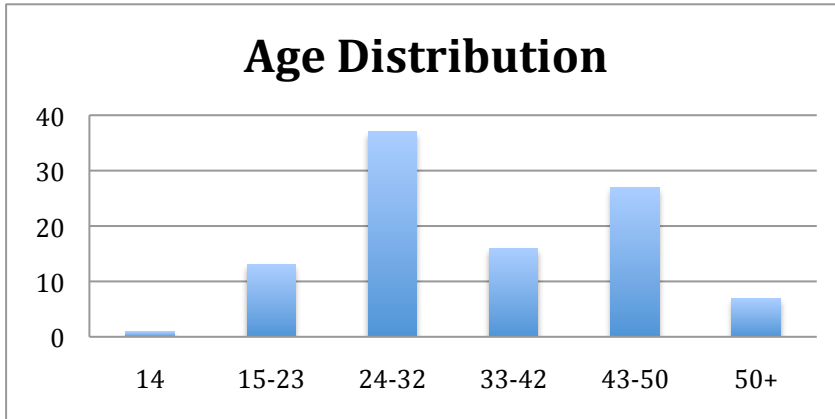
Data Analysis

Demographics

The following information summarizes the demographic makeup of the 101 participants. All participants were 14 years or older. There was one 14 year old, 13 people (13%) aged between 15 and 23, 37 people between 24 and 32, 16 people between 33 and 42, 27 people between 43 and 50 and seven people over 50 years old. [See figure 1]

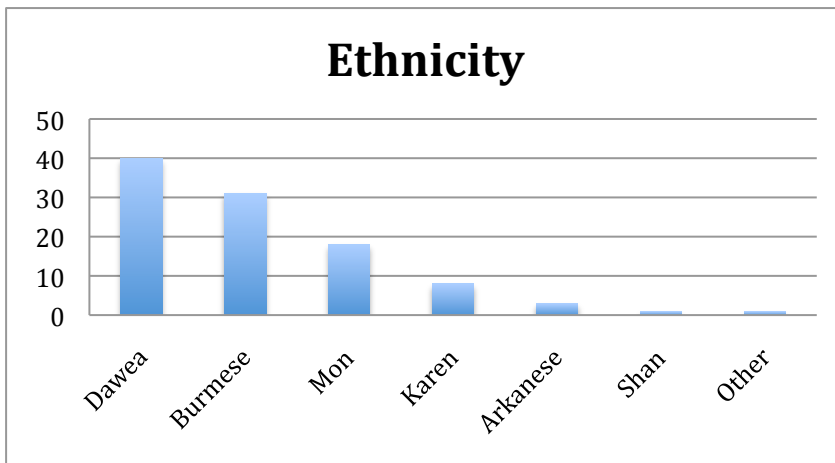
¹ "Domestic Work and the Service Industry." *Caught Between Two Hells* (2007): 27. Web. December 2010.

Figure 1:



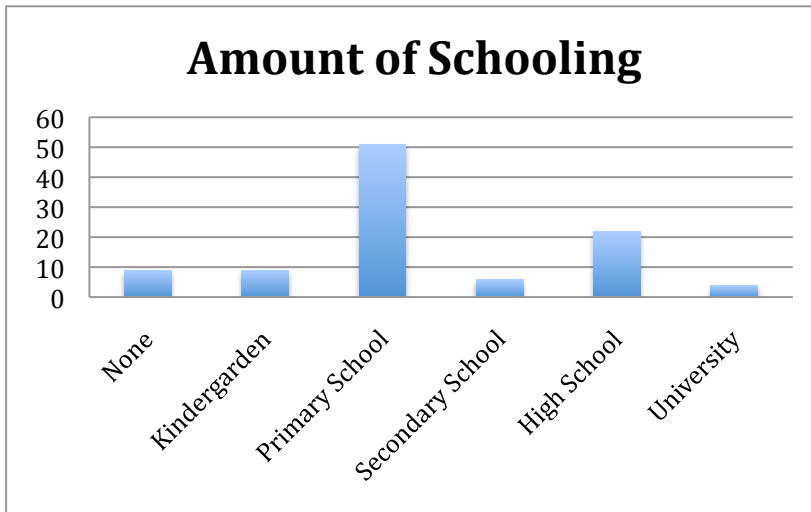
Participants lived in various districts of southern Thailand. 16 lived in Kuraburi, 56 in Phang Nga, nine in Takuapa, eight in Theimung, ten in Ban Nam Khem, and one in Ko Koh Khao. Participants were asked to identify their ethnic nationalities. [See figure 2]. 40 participants identified themselves as Dawea, 31 as Burmese, 18 as Mon, eight as Karen, three as Arakanese, one as Shan, and one responded “other”.

Figure 2:



Participants were also asked about their years of schooling. [See figure 3]. Nine (9%) never went to school, nine attended kindergarten, 51 attended primary school, six attended secondary school, 22 attended high school and four attended university.

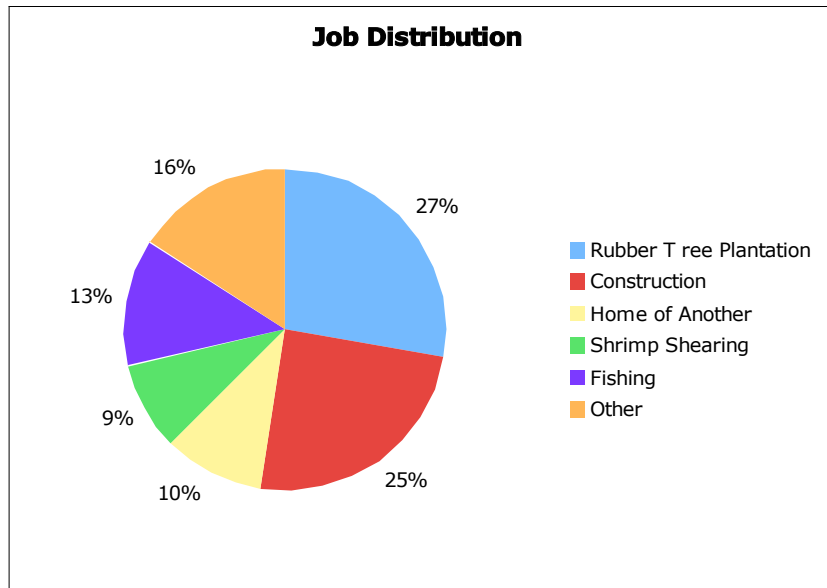
Figure 3:



Workers were asked how long they had lived in Thailand. Two people had lived in Thailand for less than one year, 57 (57%) lived in Thailand one to five years, 31 between six and ten years, twelve for eleven to twenty years and two lived in Thailand for over 20 years. The median amount of time lived in Thailand is between one and five years. Participants were asked how long they had been working at their current workplace. Three had been working for six months or less, 19 for seven months to one year, 45 for two to three years, 13 for four to five years and eleven for seven years or longer. One person chose not to respond to this question. The median amount of time spent at their current workplace is two to three years.

Workers were asked to identify their primary employment. [See figure 4] 28 worked on rubber tree plantations. On rubber tree plantations, workers work mostly at night, tapping trees. But rubber tree plantations also demand gardeners. 25 people worked in construction. This industry contracts workers to work on projects such as building houses, hotels or roads. Projects vary in duration. The average project is a few months long, but they can be much longer or shorter. Ten were employed in domestic work. This generally entails housework (cleaning, cooking, child care, etc.), but can also include helping with family businesses. Nine were shrimp shearers. These workers clean and peel the shrimp that have been caught. 13 were fishermen. Fishermen sometimes go out to sea for months or fish close to the shore, wading in the water during the day. There were 16 participants that chose "other professions." Of these, four were shopkeepers, one was a glassmaker, three worked in the palm oil industry, one was a missionary, two were teachers and four were hotel cleaners.

Figure 4:



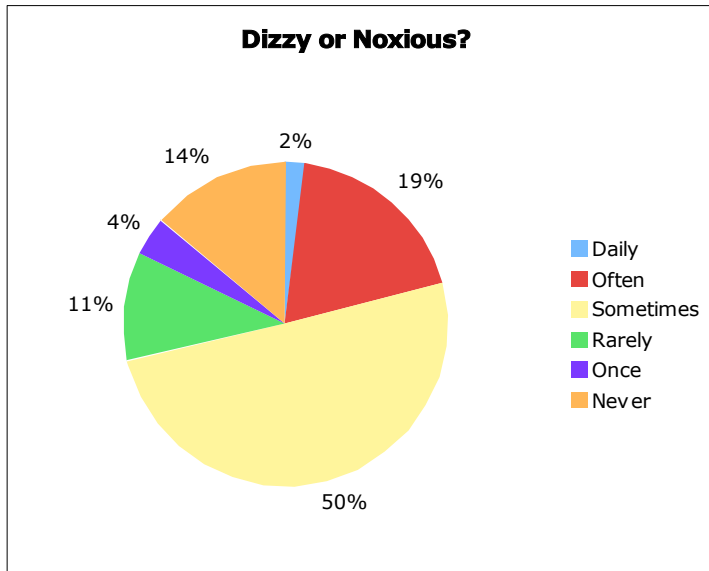
Illness and Injury

This section of the survey aimed to assess the prevalence of illnesses and injuries at, or as a result of, work. When asked how often workers develop illnesses, 19 responded “once a year,” 65 responded “a few times a year,” 16 responded “a few times a month” and there were four people who wrote alternative answers—two wrote “yes, I’ve been sick” and two wrote “never.” 16 % of workers reported being ill a few times a month. Widespread illnesses could be a direct result of work, or could be due to other living situations or in some cases, even due to genetic predispositions. Participants were further asked about their health in regards to their respiratory systems and muscle/joints.

The workers were asked whether they suffered from any respiratory ailments. Having trouble breathing and chronic coughing were cited as examples. Five people (5%) responded yes, forty-five people responded a little and forty-nine people responded no. This question was followed up with a question asking workers if, after being at their worksite for a long time, they ever started to feel dizzy or nauseous [see figure 5]. The fact that half (50%) of the workers suffer from some sort of respiratory ailment and 86% have at least once felt dizzy or nauseous at work, could be indicative of harmful fumes being inhaled² at the worksite. However, it could also be due to the heat, to the general living environment of the migrants or be the result of other causes.

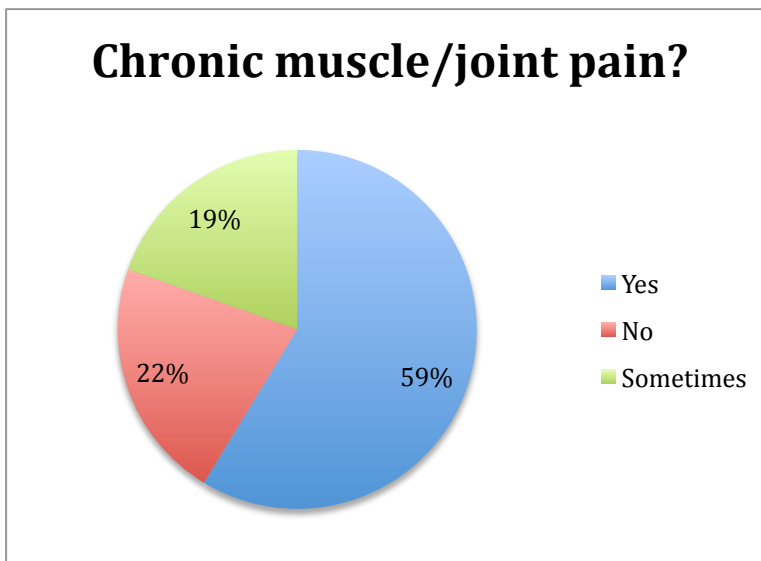
² Wieslander G, Norbäck D, Björnsson E, Janson C, Boman G. Asthma and the indoor environment: the significance of emission of formaldehyde and volatile organic compounds from newly painted indoor surfaces. *Int Arch Occup Environ Health*. 1997; 69:115-124.

Figure 5:



The participants were asked whether they suffered from chronic muscle or joint pain. [See figure 6.] [Note: Due to technical problems this question did not appear on eleven people's surveys.] 78 % of respondents suffered from some sort of chronic muscle or joint pain. This is most likely a result of extremely physically demanding labor³ or from repetitive exertion.⁴

Figure 6:



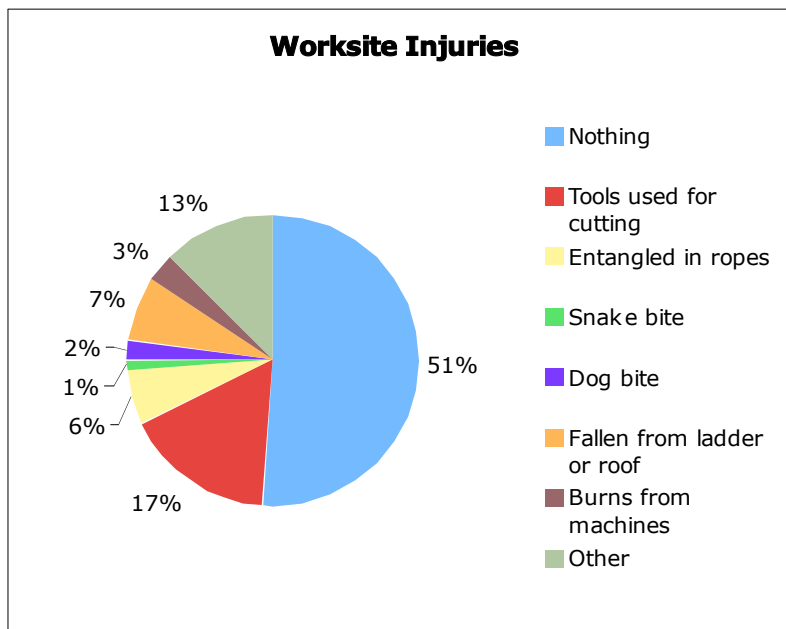
³"Muscle Aches." *New York Times* (2007): n. pag. Web. January 2011.

⁴"Joint Pains." *New York Times* (2007): n. pag. Web. January 2011.

The survey also asked about heat exhaustion. Heat exhaustion was defined as “characterized by heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, and nausea.” The overwhelming majority (83 participants) responded that they had suffered from heat exhaustion. 17 said that they had not and two responded that they did not know. These figures could be a result of insufficient water consumption and/or undue exposure to high heat for sustained periods. One question asked how many liters of water were consumed per day. Two (2%) said less than a liter, 10% said one liter, 48% said two liters, and 35% said three liters and 6% consumed four or more liters per. It is recommended that three liters of water be consumed per day.⁵ However, working for many hours in the heat requires higher water consumption.

Furthermore, one question asked about injuries at worksites. [See Figure 7] Some participants chose more than one answer. Those that chose “other” cited injuries that resulted from heavy lifting, falling down a hill, spikes, a motorbike, being cut by roofing tiles, getting hit with a hammer and falling into water. Note: Due to technical problems this question did not appear on eleven people’s surveys. Nearly half of the respondents (49%) reported being injured in some way at their workplace. These high rates of mostly preventable injuries are indicative of a general lack of safety in the workplace— possibly due to worker misunderstandings or inadequate safety gear, inadequate training, or high levels of exposure to risk.

Figure 7:



⁵ Mayo Clinic. "Water: How much should you drink every day?" *Nutrition and Healthy Eating* (2010): n. pag. Web. January 2011.

Several questions asked about tetanus. With 17% of the workers having indicated that they have been injured by “tools used for cutting” (likely rust infested tools), it becomes even more important for workers to be vaccinated for the *Clostridium tetani* toxin and understand why vaccination is necessary. The first question asked whether participants had been vaccinated for tetanus in the last ten years. 31 had, 68 had not, and two were not sure. When asked the reason for getting a tetanus shot, only 59 chose the correct example of why which was “in case I get cut by a rusty nail.” Some of the remaining participants answered that it was for malaria or in case they fell. There were also 14 who responded that they did not know and 20 who did not respond. The final question asked how often you should get vaccinated for Tetanus. Only five participants answered ten years (the correct answer)⁶. The remaining respondents were incorrect or did not know. Twenty did not respond. The abnormally high number of non-responses for the two preceding questions could indicate confusion about wording of the question or possibly with the content of the question. Nevertheless, there is an apparent lack of awareness about Tetanus.

Workplace Safety

Worker Basics

Participants were asked how many hours they worked for how many days a week [see figure 8]. They were also asked how many days of the week they worked [see figure 9]. Workers work an average of ten to eleven hours a day and seven days a week. According to Thai labor law, workers are not to work more than eight hours a day or 48 hours per week or, for hazardous labor, no more than seven hours a day and 42 hours per week⁷. Survey responses suggest rampant and flagrant violation of this law regarding Burmese migrant workers.

⁶ Davis, Charles. "Prevention." *Tetanus* (2008): 9. Web. January 2011.

⁷ "An Overview of Thailand's Labor Regulations." *Business in Asia* (2005): n. pag. Web. January 2011. <http://www.business-in-asia.com/thai_labor_law.htm>.

Figure 8:

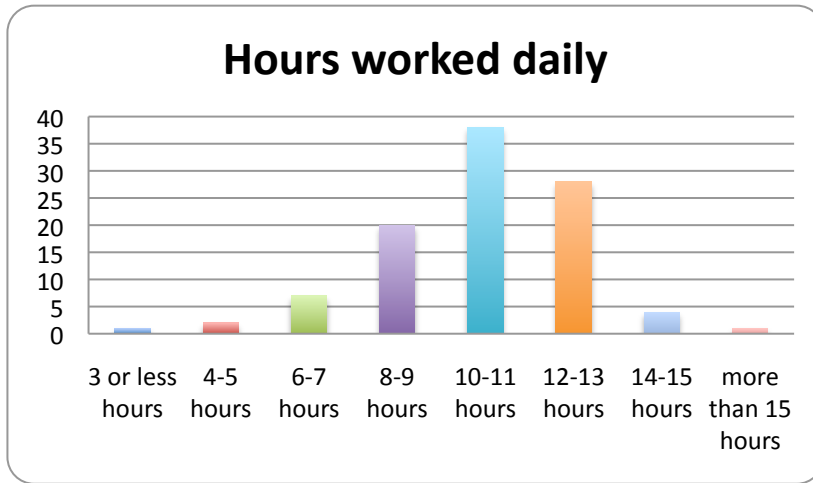
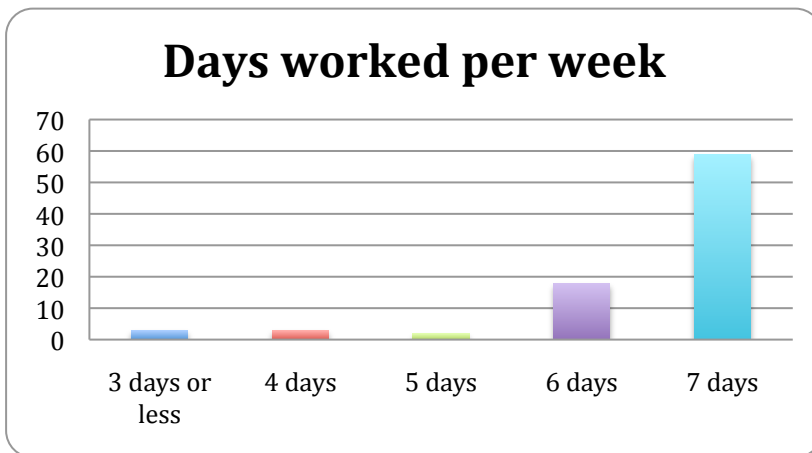


Figure 9:

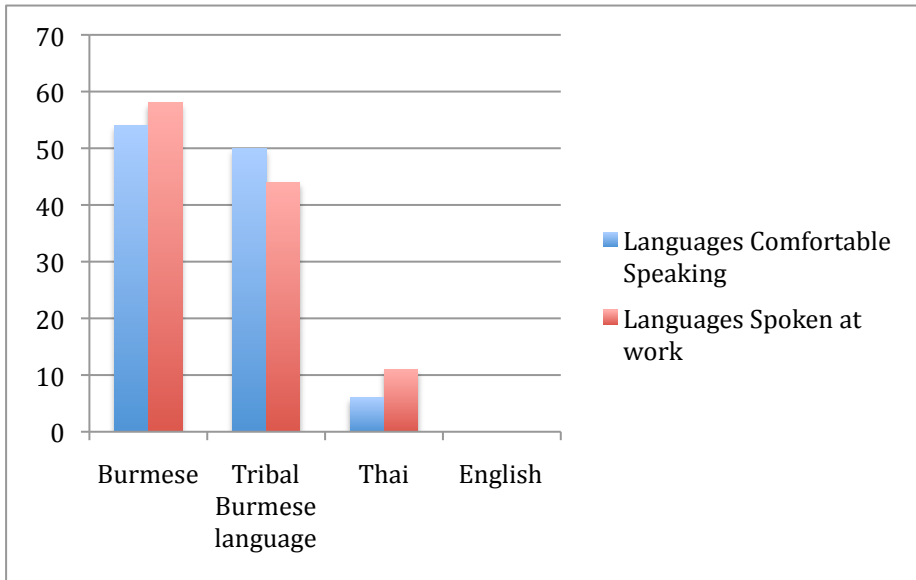


Workers were then asked about annual holidays. It should be mentioned that the schedule of rubber plantation workers varies a lot because they are unable to work when it is raining. Because of this, rubber plantation workers tended to report having the most days of holidays each year. One person (1%) said that they didn't have holidays, 7% said they have seven days or less, 33% said that they have 7-14 days, 7% said that they have 15-21 days and 33% said that they have more than 21 days. Ten people wrote in other responses – eight said it depends on rain (all were rubber plantation workers) and two said that they only worked half the year. According to Thai law, all employees are

entitled to 13 days of national holidays and six days of vacation annually⁸. Survey responses suggest many employers do not uphold this law.

Furthermore, the survey aimed to assess languages spoken at the workplace in comparison with what languages workers were comfortable speaking [see figure 10]. Some respondents were not comfortable speaking the languages that were spoken at their workplace.

Figure 10:



Participants were also asked if the instructions to operate machinery were translated into the language that they speak. Of the 85 participants who operate machinery, eleven (13%) said that they were translated into their language, 67 (79%) said that they weren't, three (4%) didn't know and four (5%) didn't have instructions. It is dangerous not to have instructions for machinery translated into either Burmese or a tribal Burmese language. This means that it's likely that only the 6% who know how to speak Thai are able to read the instructions to operate machinery. And this is assuming that they know how to read (as well as speak) Thai.

Pregnancy

Some questions addressed how employers respond to pregnancy. Women were asked what their employer would do if they became pregnant. 22 (65%) responded that their employer would make them work during some of their pregnancy; two (6%) responded that they would have to work during all of their pregnancy; eight (25%) said

⁸ "An Overview of Thailand's Labor Regulations." *Business in Asia* (2005): n. pag. Web. January 2011. <http://www.business-in-asia.com/thai_labor_law.htm>.

that they would be fired. Additionally, two (6%) women wrote in that their employer would do nothing. There were six women who did not respond, some choosing not to comment because they were single. Women were also asked how much time off they received after giving birth [see figure 11]. Of those that wrote in “other,” two (6%) said that they would already be fired and three (9%) said their employer would do nothing. Thai labor law states that every woman is entitled to 90 days of maternity leave⁹. Only 20% of employers were perceived to adhere to this law.

Figure 11:

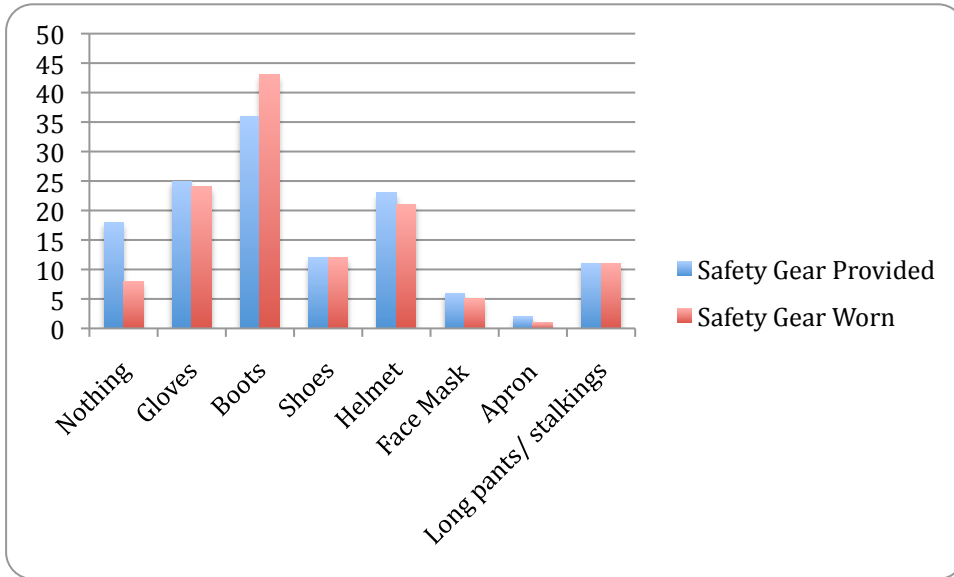


Safety Equipment

Many Burmese migrant workers work in jobs that require substantial protective gear for adequate safety. The jobs that were judged to meet such criteria were rubber plantation workers, construction workers, shrimp shearers, fishers, glassmakers and palm oil workers. 79 workers work in these occupations. One question asked workers what safety gear they were supplied at work and the next question asked what they actually wore [see figure 12]. In general, workers wore what they were provided with and, in some cases (e.g. boots) provided their own gear. There were also some cases where workers were provided with gear (e.g. face masks) and did not wear them. No worker in these hazardous industries should be without adequate safety gear and yet 18 (23%) of the workers were not provided with any.

⁹ "An Overview of Thailand's Labor Regulations." *Business in Asia* (2005): n. pag. Web. January 2011. <http://www.business-in-asia.com/thai_labor_law.htm>.

Figure 12:



Participants were further questioned about safety gear. When asked how often their employer checked that they were wearing their safety gear 70% of respondents reported “never.” [See figure 13.]

Figure 13:



Further, when asked what their employer would do should they be found not wearing safety gear, 82% responded “nothing.” [See figure 134.]

Figure 14:



Workplace Environment

One question asked participants if there was a medically trained staff member on site to help in the event of a major injury. Nine (9%) of the participants said that there was, 82% said that there was not, 3% said sometimes and 7% responded that they did not know. Because many worksites are remote and far from a clinic, extra precautions often should be taken. The high rates of injury indicate that a trained medic should be available for help and yet only 11% responded that there was ever a trained medic on site.

Participants were asked, “Are there any posters, signs, pamphlets etc. that identify the safety regulations of your workplace?” In response, 15 (15%) said yes, 79% said no and 5% didn’t know. Two people did not respond. In dangerous work environments, with often overworked and tired workers, safety reminders can go a long way to uphold safety. Although many workers are illiterate, pictures and illustrations can improve workplace safety.

One question asked whether workers took any measures to prevent mosquito bites at their workplace. Eight (8%) responded that mosquitoes are not a problem at their work, 31% said that they did, 8% said they sometimes did, and 53% said that they took no precautions to prevent mosquito bites. Because of the existence of dengue fever and malaria in southern Thailand, all workers should be taking some precaution against mosquitoes and yet the majority is not.

When asked whether they were allowed to drink alcohol at their worksite, 5% said that they were permitted to drink a little, 12% said that they were sometimes permitted to drink and 72% said that they were not allowed to drink at work. There were two

participants who chose not to respond. [See figure 15.] Alcohol severely impedes judgment and should never be consumed during work.

Figure 15:



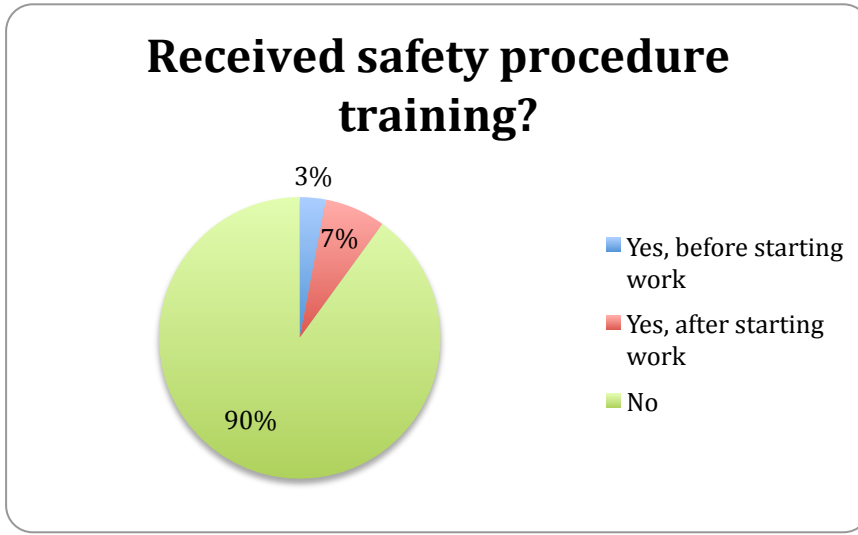
All participants were asked whether or not they could swim but the results are predominantly relevant for fishers. Of the 14 fishermen, four (28%) said that they could not swim. This skill is essential for basic safety of all fishermen.

Employer's responsibility

Under Thai law, employers are responsible for ensuring that their workers have learned how to do their job in a safe and efficient manner and for overseeing that safety is upheld in the workplace. Therefore, participants were asked how they learned the skills that are demanded by their work, 16 (16%) said that their employer taught them, two (2%) learned at a workplace training session, twelve (12%) said from a friend, 47 (46%) said from a coworker, 19 (18%) said from a parent, five (5%) said from an NGO and two (2%) said that they still are not familiar with the skills necessary for their work. The lack of uniformity in training indicates that there is little protocol for training, and yet 98% of the workers claim to know the skills demanded by their work. However, when asked who taught them about workplace safety, 24 (18%) reported no one, 19 (15%) said their employers, 15 (11%) cited a friend, 54 (41%) said a coworker, 13 (10%) referred to a parent and six (4%) said an NGO. The system of discussing safety at work is clearly inadequate, as displayed by the 18% of workers who never received safety training.

This field was further explored with a question that asked if employees had ever received health and safety procedural training from their employer [see figure 16]. Of the respondents, three (3%) said that they did before they started working, 7% said that did after they started working and 90% said that they never received such training.

Figure 16:



Pesticide, Chemicals and Chemical Sprays

Participants were asked if they used pesticides, chemicals or chemical sprays at work. The 49 people who responded affirmatively were asked further questions. When determining the frequency with which workers use pesticides or chemicals, seven (14%) said daily, eight (16%) said often, 30 (59%) said sometimes and six (12%) said rarely. They were then asked who taught them how to work with the substances and two (4%) said no one, 16 (32%) said that their employer taught them, nobody said that they learned at a workplace training session, eleven (22%) said a friend, 18 (36%) said a coworker, 3 (6%) said a parent and nobody responded that an NGO taught them.

Finally, participants were asked what safety gear they wore when working with pesticides, chemicals or chemical sprays. The participants were instructed to circle multiple items of gear if relevant. Seven (14%) said that they wear no gear, 24 (49%) wear gloves, 18 (37%) wear boots, ten (20%) wear shoes, 15 (31%) wear a helmet, eight (16%) wear goggles or other eye protection, 18 (37%) wear a face mask and three (6%) wear an apron. There was also one person who wrote that they wore long pants. Ideally, all workers would be wearing essential gear such as goggles, gloves and facemasks.

Emergency Situations

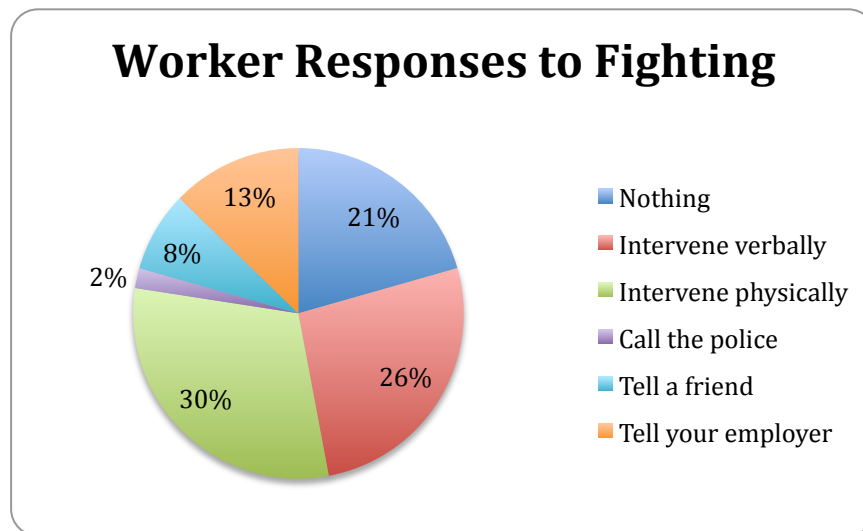
Worker Responses

This section of the survey aims to assess how workers react to emergencies in the workplace. One question asked how often there was violence or fighting among workers. Respondents were given the following options: daily, often, sometimes, rarely and never. Eighty-one people (81%) responded that there was sometimes violence/fighting and

eleven people responded that there was never violence/fighting. [Note: Due to technical problems this question did not appear on eleven people's surveys.] These high rates of violence in the workplace indicate tensions and miscommunication among workers.

In attempts to evaluate workers' responses, participants were asked what they would do if they saw fighting among their coworkers. [See figure 17.] Another question aimed to determine whom workers would call "in the case of an emergency." The participants responded as follows: 68 (68%) said a family member, 28 said a friend, one said the police, 13 said a coworker, 26 said the employer, eleven said emergency care and nine said no one. Some participants chose to circle more than one option. Other questions determined that 70% of participants did *not* know the number for the police and 80% did *not* know the number for emergency care. It should be noted that there were multiple participants who said that in the case of an emergency they would call either the police or emergency care and yet in the next question responded that they did not know the number for either the police or emergency care. The lack of uniformity in these responses indicates there is no protocol for dealing with the violence that occurs widely and frequently at worksites for Burmese migrants.

Figure 17:



The questionnaire also asked how workers would deal with serious and minor injuries. When asked what they would do were they to be seriously injured, six (5%) responded that they would do nothing, ten (9%) would contact their employer, 58 (50%) would go to a hospital, four (3%) would go to a doctor that lives in the community, 36 (31%) would go to a pharmacy and one (1%) responded other. Some people chose multiple answers.

There were a few questions about self-treatment and although many workers seemed proficient in managing minor cuts and burns there were many methods cited that could be harmful or cause infections. When asked what they would do, should they be cut, workers responded by often circling more than one response. Eight (6%) responded that they would do nothing, one responded they would wash their cut with river water alone, twelve (9%) would wash their cut with soap and river water, 25 (19%) would wash with soap and clean water, 59 (44%) would apply a bandage, four (3%) would apply aloe vera or another ointment, 22 (16%) would contact a medically trained person and four gave other responses— three (2%) said that they would apply fish paste and one said they would use alcohol.

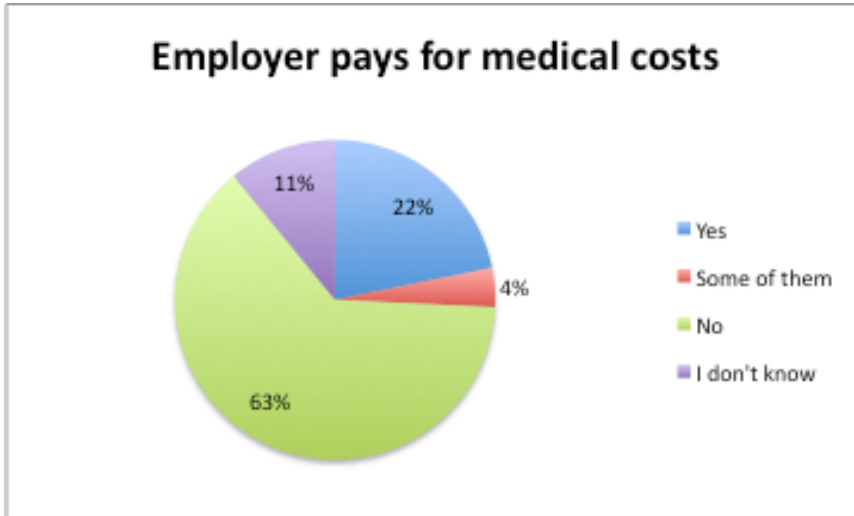
When it came to burns, there was a similarly wide range of responses and people circled multiple answers. When asked what they would do should they be burned, ten (8%) said nothing, 28 (22%) would apply ice, two (2%) would clean their burn with soap and water, 55 (43%) would apply aloe vera or another ointment, 19 (15%) would contact a medically trained person and twelve chose “other”—citing fish paste, toothpaste, ink, running water, banana leaves and sugar water as applicable ointments. Most seem to grasp a basic knowledge of self-care. However, some methods (e.g. cleaning with river water, ink) could cause more harm than help.

Employers Responsibility

Employers play a large role in determining whether safety is a priority in the workplace. Survey participants were asked if their employers had ever discussed what would happen in the case of “a disaster”. Fires, storms and Tsunamis were all cited as examples. Twenty-eight (28%) participants responded yes, 65 responded no and 7 responded that they did not know.

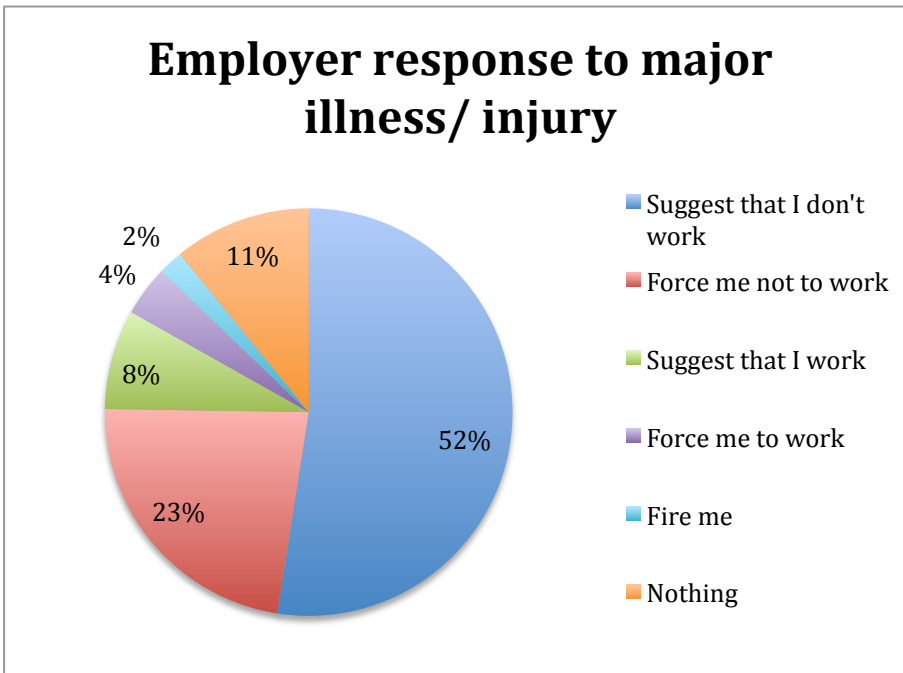
Participants were asked if their employers would pay for their medical costs if they were injured at their workplace or developed medical ailments as a result of work. [See figure 18.] Sixty-three percent of employers do not cover the cost of any medical fees, even when they come as a result of work. Were employers to be held accountable for medical costs, they would be more likely to make provisions for their employees to be better protected.

Figure 18:



Workers were asked how their employees would respond if they had major injuries or illness. [See figure 19.] Although employers generally demonstrate that they are reasonable when it comes to ill health, no worker should be coerced or forced to work during times of major illness or injury. Additionally, the high percentage of participants that wrote that their employer would do nothing is indicative of perceived indifference by employers.

Figure 19:



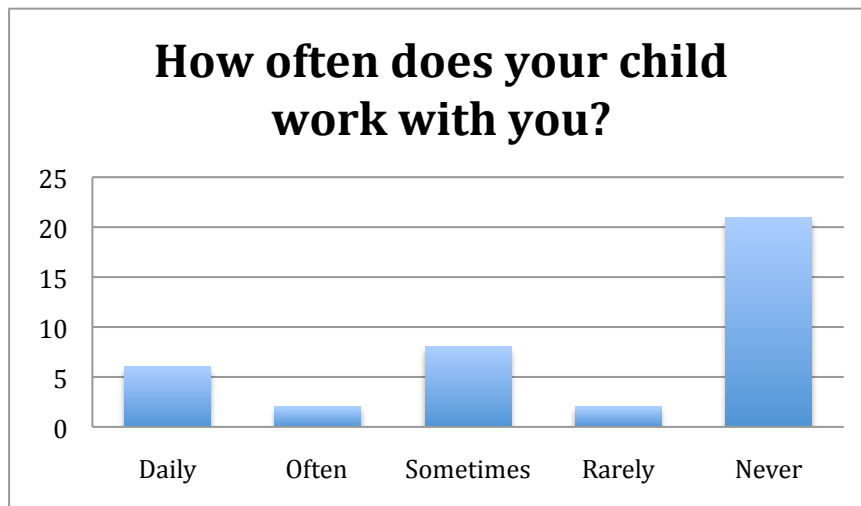
Children at the Workplace

When participants were asked if they had children, 46 (46%) responded they did, 50 (50%) wrote that they did not and five (5%) said that they had children but that they were in Burma. Those that responded affirmatively were asked to fill in further questions. They were asked if their children had been injured at their worksite and if so, how. The vast majority (70%) had never been injured. However two children were reported injured by tools used for cutting, three were reported bitten by a dog, one child had fallen from a roof or ladder, one had received a chemical burn, two had been hurt by spikes and one was injured by a nail.

All parents were asked whether their children could swim. However, this information is most relevant for the children of fishermen and fisherwomen. Of the five fishermen's children, four did not know how to swim.

Many children go to work with their parents because there is no viable alternative. Parents were asked how often they brought their children to work. Four (9%) said daily, two (5%) said often, eight (19%) said sometimes, two (5%) said rarely and 22 (51%) said never. Some of the people that chose "never" commented that their children attended school. Parents were then asked how often their children worked with them [see figure 20].

Figure 20:



If children are at work, they should not be permitted to work and they should be warned about the dangers and safety precautions that must be taken, especially regarding machinery and other dangerous equipment. When asked who taught their children workplace safety, eleven (22%) said no one, 36% said themselves, 2% said their employer, 12% said a coworker, 14% said a parent and 4% said an NGO. The lack of

uniformity implies that there is no established system for warning children about workplace hazards.

Conclusion and Follow-up

This survey assessed the workplace environment for Burmese migrant workers in southern Thailand, and the respective roles and responsibilities of employers and employees. The results indicate issues where improvement is necessary. The survey, however, has limitations as well. It is not fully representative of Thailand, and it is only a small sample from regions of southern Thailand where the survey was administered. Some technical problems could have affected the results. In eleven surveys, questions numbers 11-15 were missing. There were also occasional translation errors (English to Burmese) that contributed to confusion for the participants. More thorough piloting can reduce the potential for such errors in future surveys. Because of the remote living areas of Burmese migrant workers and because of the limited time and resources of the FEDs staff, it was not possible to have an entirely random sample. A larger set of data is more representative and a larger pool of respondents in the next survey is thus desirable. Finally, all the participants were surveyed while in their homes. Those who were rarely home because of their working hours were thus likely underrepresented. Some participants may have been fearful of employer's backlash (despite the guaranteed anonymity) and accordingly very careful in their answers.

As this was the first major workplace survey conducted in the area, it was relatively general as it aimed to gather information on many different aspects of work. More specific questions about particular work, such as fishing, rubber tree plantation labor, or construction might shed more light on problems and provide deeper insights. Additional questions for future research could for example be: Are all the fishing boats equipped with life jackets? Do the unconventional working hours of rubber plantation workers affect their ability to safely carry out their work? Other matters, such as varying wages based on gender should also be looked into. This is discussed in more detail below.

Demographics

- Although most Burmese migrants are getting some sort of education, an effort should be made for them to complete more years of schooling. In this sample, the few that completed schooling had better occupations than others (e.g. teacher, missionary).

Illness and Injury

- Worksites should be examined for harmful chemical agents that could be inhaled and be the cause of respiratory ailments and dizziness/nausea.
- The large number of people who suffer from chronic muscle/joint pain demonstrates the need for greater efforts to prevent working overtime. The cause for these pains should be further investigated.

- The high rates of injury can be reduced— possibly with the implementation of more training or the use of more safety gear.

Workplace Safety

Worker Basics

- Burmese migrants are overworked to a point of danger. An intervention needs to ensure that that Thai law is upheld.
- Instructions to operate machinery should be translated into the languages understood by the workers.

Pregnancy

- Employers should adhere to Thai law and grant their female workers 90 days of maternity leave if requested. Women should also not have to labor strenuously late into pregnancy.

Safety Equipment

- Worksites should be assessed to determine what safety gear is necessary. Then employers should supply the gear for their employees.

Workplace Environment

- A medically trained person should be on sight in large, hazardous industries to assist with the apparently frequent injuries.
- Illustrated safety posters and pamphlets need to be displayed around the workplace, especially near heavy machinery.
- Workers should be made aware of the necessity of protecting themselves from mosquito bites.
- Employers need to enforce a no alcohol policy on worksites.
- Every fisherman should be taught to swim.

Employers Responsibility

- Employers should be held accountable for their workers health and safety at the workplace so that they have a greater incentive to protect them.
- Research should be done to determine the most effective ways of training workers in skills training and safety training. A uniform protocol should be followed to carry out such trainings.

Pesticides, chemicals and chemical sprays

- Employers need to both supply and enforce the use of safety equipment when employees work with toxic chemicals.

Emergency Situations

Workers Responses

- There should be an established protocol for dealing with workplace violence.
- Attempts should be made to resolve issues between workers that lead to violence.
- Workers need to be able to perform basic first aid. They need to avoid potentially harmful practices such as washing open wounds in river water, fish paste or ink.

Employers Responsibility

- There should be a written and spoken emergency situation protocol.

- Workers' rights (as granted by Thai law) need to be enforced in the workplace that allow for sick/recovery days without threats of job loss.

Children in the Workplace

- Because many parents have to bring their children to work with them, employers should be encouraged to provide a day-care area for the children so that they are less likely to be injured and are not forced to work with their parents.
- School keeps children off of worksites. Therefore, more efforts need to be made to get more children into school.