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Table of contents		JOURNAL LINKS
able of contents		Journal home
Volume 419		Journal scope
2020		Information for organizers
Previous issue     Next issue		Information for authors
		Contact us
The 3rd International Conference on Civil and Environmental Engineering (ICCEE 2019) 29–30 Augu 2019, Bali, Indonesia	st	Reprint services from Curran Associates
Published online: 08 February 2020		Part and
Open all abstracts		physicsworld WEBINAR
Published online: 8 February 2020 Preface		Optimize
DPEN ACCESS	011001	enhance battery
Preface	011001	performance via multi-technique
+ Open abstract 📰 View article 🔁 PDF		materials analysis
OPEN ACCESS	011002	Live at 3.30 p.m. BST/ 10.30 a.m. EDT on
Peer review statement		4 April 2023
Open abstract     In View article     ExpDF		Sportates
D		Waters   🕾
Papers		OXFORD
Infrastructure Development		
OPEN ACCESS	012001	
Earthquake Vulnerability of Port Structures in Indonesia		
H Widyastuti, E Lumantarna, M Sofi, M I Ramli, Y. Oktavlanus and A Rajabifard Open abstract III View article R PDF		CLICK TO
DPEN ACCESS	012002	REGISTER
Effectiveness of sediment flushing by using under sluice flush canal	and the second	
A Satanpo, Suripin and I K Hadihardaja		
+ Open abstract III View article III PDF		
OPEN ACCESS	012003	
Evaluation of factors contributing to wave-in-deck using pushover analysis for fixed jacket structures		
N C Yee, A Johan, A E Kajuputra and L A Pangestu		
Open abstract     In View article     PDF		
OPEN ACCESS	012004	
Individuals' activity space in Seri Iskandar Malaysia		
M A Z Khalif and D B E Dharmowijoyo		
Open abstract III View article III PDF		
OPEN ACCESS	012005	
Lock-brick system technology is an ecological building material innovation C L Suslawati, P K Yulius Suni and E Tjandra		
Open abstract [7] View article [8] PDF		
OPEN ACCESS Numerical analysis of water temperature difference on baroclinic flow in the region of freshwater influence (ROFI)	012006	
Numerical analysis of water temperature difference on baroclinic flow in the region of freshwater influence (KOH) A N Anfin, S fono and A T Lando		
+ Open abstract IP View article TS PDF		
DPEN ACCESS	012007	
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/ Meo and I W Tyas			
<ul> <li>Open abstract</li> </ul>	10 View article	TA PDF	
OPEN ACCESS	s of flexible road	based on roadroid software in Perintis Kemerdekaan Street Makassar	01
M Lukman, H Halim			
• Open abstract	7 View article	25 PDF	
OPEN ACCESS			01
	tion path as acce	ssibility in the marginal housing on the water at Kampung Karabba and Marbor, Bu	
N Amri, I Asmal and	5 Amin		
Open abstract	[7] View article	TR PDF	
OPEN ACCESS			01
Assessment of tsa	unami risk to offs	shore platforms in Indonesia archipelago	
A Y Baeda and G P C	arayannis		
+ Open abstract	(1) View article	TA PDF	
OPEN ACCESS			03
Conceptual frame		dge sharing and project team performance relationship in design and build project	age de
M N Indriani, I N A T	hanaya, N Y Astana	and A A G A Yana	
Dpen abstract	2 View article	T PDF	
OPEN ACCESS	V-510 - 11		01
Experimental inve	estigation on stre	ength improvement of lateritic Halmahera soil using quicklime stabilization	
Z Saing, M H Ibrahin	n and klanto		
+ Open abstract	[] View article	PDF	
+ Open abstract	III View article	5 PDF	01
OPEN ACCESS		To PDF	01
OPEN ACCESS	or's physiological		01
OPEN ACCESS Construction labo	or's physiological		01
OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anoncho and M Y	or's physiological Suparman	workload based on labor's perspective	
OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anondho and M Y	or's physiological Suparman  [* View article	workload based on labor's perspective	
OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anondho and M Y	or's physiological Suparman P View article for batchan durie	workload based on labor's perspective	
DPEN ACCESS Construction labor & Anondho and MY Down abstract DPEN ACCESS An easy method f	or's physiological Suparman P View article for batchan durie	workload based on labor's perspective	
OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anoncho and M Y Open abstract OPEN ACCESS An easy method 1 A Aydda, O F Attrue	or's physiological Suparman E View article for barchan dune ayree and B Pokha	I workload based on labor's perspective PDF es automatic extraction from multispectral satellite data rel	01
OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anondho and M Y Open abstract OPEN ACCESS An easy method H A Ayidda, O F Althoug Open abstract OPEN ACCESS	or's physiological Suparman [P] View article for barchan dune aynee and E Pokha [P] View article	I workload based on labor's perspective PDF es automatic extraction from multispectral satellite data rel	01
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OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anondho and M Y Open abstract OPEN ACCESS An easy method f A Aydda, O F Althuw Open abstract OPEN ACCESS Application of pa fernate Sabaruddin and A D	or's physiological Suparman [P] View article for barchan dune aynee and E Pokha [P] View article wement conditio eni	I workload based on labor's perspective	01 01 03
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OPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anoncho and M Y Open abstract OPEN ACCESS An easy method f A Aydda, O F Althuw Open abstract OPEN ACCESS Application of pa fernate Sabanuddin and A D Open abstract OPEN ACCESS Dynamics urban of	or's physiological Suparman [E] View article for barchan dune ayneo and E Pokha [F] View article wement conditio eni [E] View article development to t	I workload based on labor's perspective	01 01 th
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DPEN ACCESS Construction labo 8 Anoncho and M Y	or's physiological Suparman [P] View article for barchan dume aysse and E Pokha [P] View article wement condition eni [P] View article development to to D M Actan and S A V [P] View article	I workload based on labor's perspective	01 01 01
DPEN ACCESS Construction labor 8 Anondho and M Y	or's physiological Suparman [P] View article for barchan dune ayree and E Pokha [P] View article wement condition ent [P] View article development to to D M Artan and S A 1 [P] View article conomic activity	I workload based on labor's perspective  PDF  s automatic extraction from multispectral satellite data rel  PDF  n index (PCI) on the assessment of the Kalumata highway section of the City of Sou  PDF  the carrying capacity of agricultural land Maros Region Province South Sulawesi Yant  PDF	01 01 01 01
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DPEN ACCESS Construction labor 8 Anoncho and M Y	or's physiological Suparman [P] View article for barchan dune aynee and E Pokha [P] View article wement condition ent [P] View article development to t O M Attan and S A 1 [P] View article sconomic activity A Bizwati [P] View article	I workload based on labor's perspective         PDF         as automatic extraction from multispectral satellite data         rel         PDF         n index (PCI) on the assessment of the Kalumata highway section of the City of Sou         PDF         the carrying capacity of agricultural land Maros Region Province South Sulawesi Vant         PDF         rin coastal community (Case study: Bulu Cindea village, Burgoro district, Pangkep r         PDF	01 01 01 01 01 01
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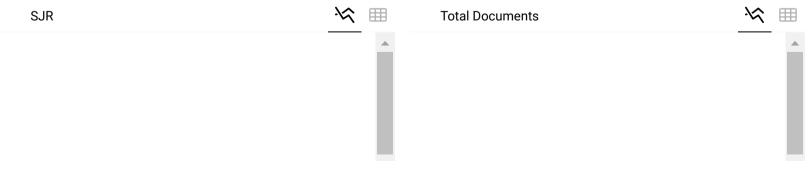
COUNTRY	SUBJECT AREA AND CATEGORY	PUBLISHER	H-INDEX
United Kingdom	Earth and Planetary Sciences Earth and Planetary	IOP Publishing Ltd.	41
institutions in United Kingdom	Sciences (miscellaneous)		
Media Ranking in United Kingdom	Environmental Science Environmental Science (miscellaneous)		
	Physics and Astronomy Physics and Astronomy (miscellaneous)		

PUBLICATION TYPE	ISSN	COVERAGE	INFORMATION
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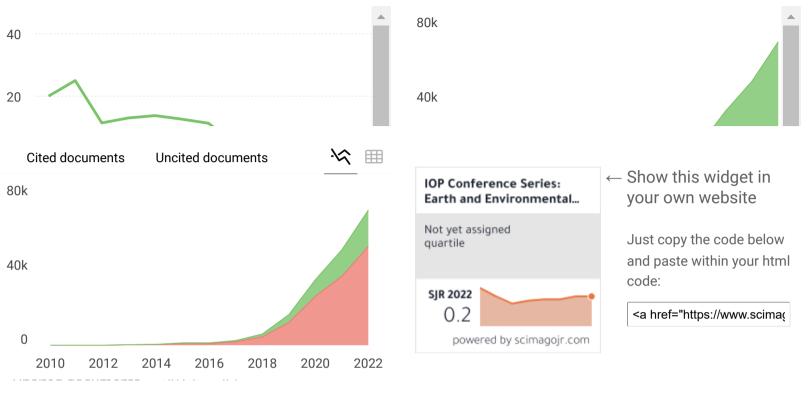
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## Construction labor's physiological workload based on labor's perspective

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### Construction labor's physiological workload based on labor's perspective

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Abstract. Construction craftwork is a physically strenuous and demanding occupation. Physically demanding work leads to physical fatigue which is associated with decreased productivity. This paper investigates the feasibility of measuring in situ physical demands based on a labor perspective. In that case, physiological measures of energy expenditure data were collected from 110 construction workers performing typical construction work, in this case, is an ironworker. The measurement of energy expenditure during physical work activities is considered a measure of the physiological workload experienced by construction workers. The measured data were evaluated against published guidelines for acceptable levels of physical performance. The result shows that the working load of ironworkers in Jakarta is very heavy on 3.0925 Kcal/minute energy expenditure by labor perspective. This paper developed for further applied research regarding the physical demands of construction work.

#### **1. Introduction**

Construction craftwork is a physically demanding occupation that leads to physical fatigue which is associated with productivity decrease. This condition gives influence on time management as one important variable in construction management. The nature of the construction services industry has evolved where contractors rely on labor [1]. The more time the workers do their jobs, it decreases the ability to convert chemical energy into mechanics [2]. In general, physical fatigue leads to productivity and motivation decreased, disorganization, poor judgment, poor quality of work, job dissatisfaction, accidents, and injuries [3-4].

Basically, productivity is influenced by 3 factors namely workload, work capacity and an additional burden due to the work environment. Labor productivity is a fundamental part of the information for estimating and scheduling construction projects [5]. The workload itself is related to the physical, mental and social burdens that affect the workforce. Several previous studies have suggested that workers who feel fatigued have difficulty with their physical and/ or cognitive functions [6]. Labor has a very important role in improving construction performance [7-8].

Further studies of the physical demands of labor had been conducted since the 1950s and 1960s up to now. Abdelhamid and Everett conducted research based on occupational physiology, energy expenditure, oxygen consumption, and pulse rate. Understanding the physical needs of construction work is essential to protecting safety and health while increasing labor productivity [9].

Based on the previous research above, this paper was describing preliminary research conducted in Jakarta to identify the workload of construction workers from labors perspective with the ironworkers as specific labor classification.

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IOP Conf. Series: Earth and Environmental Science **419** (2020) 012014 doi:10.1088/1755-1315/419/1/012014

#### 2. Methodology

#### 2.1 Data gathering

This preliminary research used the questionnaire as a research instrument for gathering data. The questionnaire consists of 4 main variables which are: Level of ability, working expense, working weight, and level of fatigue tiredness. These 4 variables are measured by several physiological indicators each of which are obtained from the literature of previous research. The questionnaire addressed to the ironworkers at a construction project as object goals in this research. Likert scale is used to measure perceptions, attitudes or opinions of a person about an event or a social phenomenon, based on the operational definition set by the researcher. In this research, the Likert scale with the value of 1 (one) is the minimum value (not agree) up to the value of 5 (five) the maximum value (strongly agree).

#### 2.2 Data processing

The process of data analysis is done by calculating the value of the RII (Relative Importance Index) method of each indicator on the questionnaire, which is based on workload, ability, fatigue level, and psychological influence. The value of RII calculated by the formula:

$$\operatorname{RII}_{i} = \frac{\sum_{l=1}^{Q} l n_{l}}{Q \sum n_{l}}$$
(1)

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i = Question/ statement item

 $n_{\ell}$  = Number of the respondent with *l* score answer

l = Number of Likert scale

Q = Likert range

Each question RII value will be ranked from the largest RII value to the smallest. The workload of each worker determined based on table physiological demands by construction trade (Abdelhamid, 2002) with the value of energy expenditure. Workload conversion is done by multiplying the value of RII from each item of the question with the value of energy expenditure as in the following equation:

$$WL_n = P_n \times EE_n \tag{2}$$

 $WL_n = Workload indicator n$ 

 $P_n = RII value of indicator n$ 

 $EE_n$  = Energy expenditure indicator n as table physiological demands

Then the next step is to calculate the value of the workload of ironworkers by sum up the value of the first rank of workload for each independent variable which is the workload, ability, fatigue level, and psychological influence.

$$WL Ironworker Total = \frac{WLvar1 + WLvar2 + WLvar3 + WLvar4}{4}$$
(3)

Energy expenditure calculation was done also with the same thing method, where each variable was determine based on the top ranking of sub-variable, then the sum of it divided by 4 type variables.

#### 3. Result and discussion

#### 3.1 Result

The questionnaire consists of 4 variables and 21 indicators where variable workload had 4 indicators which are respondents' opinions about their workload. The variable ability had 6 indicators consist of how the ironworker doing their job. Variable fatigue consists of 8 indicators of working conditions

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RII analysis tabulated as seen on table 1 for ironworker perspective about working load they have to bear, table 2 for their ability or competence, table 3 shows the level of fatigue on their perspective and table 4 describes environment influence on their performance. This tabulation is the result of the analysis.

Table 1. working load for an ironworker.			compe	etencies.	-		
Question number	RII	Ranking	Energy expenditure	Working load value	Question number	RII	Ranking
(Q)	(P)		(EE) (Kcal/min)	Wl	(Q)	(P)	
3	0.82	1	5.65	4.63	1	0.82	1
4	0.75	2	5.6	4.22	2	0.80	2
1	0.70	3	3.53	2.48	5	0.76	3
2	0.67	4	2.61	1.74	4	0.72	4
					3	0.69	5

Table 1.	Working	load	for	an	ironworker.

expenditure Working load value Energy (EE) W1 (Kcal/min) 4.61 5.65 5.6 4.50 5.31 4.06 3.53 2.53 3.53 2.45 0.69 3 6 0.66 6 2.61 1.73

Table 2. Working load for ironworker

Table 3. Fatigue level of an ironworker.

Question number	RII	Ranking	Energy expenditure	Working load value
(Q)	(P)		(EE) (Kcal/min)	Wl
2	0.94	1	5.65	5.32
4	0.84	2	5.60	4.72
1	0.78	3	5.31	4.16
3	0.74	4	5.31	3.96
5	0.67	5	3.86	2.60
6	0.67	6	3.53	2.38
7	0.66	7	3.53	2.34
8	0.62	8	2.61	1.62

Table 4. Psychology impact.

Question number	RII	Ranking	Energy expenditure	Working load value
(Q)	(P)		(EE) (Kcal/min)	Wl
1	0.79	1	3.53	2.78
2	0.75	2	3.53	2.63
3	0.69	3	2.61	1.79

The RII analysis gave 4 sub-variables which are: continuously works for physically load variable, type of tools for competencies, the power requirement for fatigue and rest time for psychology impact, as topranking answered by the ironworkers.

The total amount of ironworker working load by summing the amount of each variable divided by 4 to get average, gives 4.31 Kcal/minute based on the ironworker perspective. The above results are based on energy expenditure relative to the perspective of the construction workforce (ironworker).

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#### 3.2 Discussion

Ironworkers have a workload based on energy expenditure of 4.31 Kcal/min Energy expenditure values obtained from the physiological demands by construction trade table. This result classified ironworker jobs at a very heavy level. This is a suitable result with some previous research which states that the work of the smith or ironworker classified as heavy work [10].

It is clear that ironworkers work beyond the generally accepted reasonable threshold for energy expenditure. Not surprisingly the workers were exhausted at the end of their working day. If the worker cannot get around or find alternative work, then the worker can face the dilemma of continuing his work caused by fatigue.

#### 4. Conclusions

This paper reports the physiological workload from the perspective of its specific workers. The workload of ironworkers is 4.31 Kcal/min. The findings of this research reveal that based on the energy expenditure; the ironworker workload is classified as level very heavy work [11]. This may cause experience physical fatigue, leading to a decrease in productivity and motivation, lack of attention and decision making, poor quality of work, accidents, and work-related injuries.

The main purpose of this study is to address the need to change the policy philosophy of safety in the field of construction. This can be done by applying physiological work to the workplace. This study is only limited to the calculation of the workload of construction workers from the perspective of the workers itself and it is associated with the value of energy expenditure. Further research should investigate not only the value of energy expenditure but also other factors that can show more accurate results.

Additional research is also needed for other types of workers and shows how the workload will affect the changes in the workforce. This will assist workers and managers in identifying opportunities to reduce workload or work fatigue and introduce work procedures that accommodate the capabilities of all workers while increasing productivity.

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