1. Introduction

The costs associated with the diagnosis and care of work related musculoskeletal disorders (WRMSD) amounts to tens of billions of dollars each year in the United States. Moreover, WRMSDs are also the leading cause of work disability in most part of the world. Knowing various predictors and prognosis of WRMSDs is important in its effective management. The main aim of the study was to review the current literature in order to know various predictors and prognostic factors of WRMSDs.

2. Methods

A systematic review of the published literature was conducted to know about the prognosis of WRMSD. The literature search was done in various search engines including Pubmed, Cochrane Library and Pedro (Physiotherapy Evidence Database). Three reviewers conducted the systematic review based on the PRISMA criteria and any disagreements were resolved through discussion among them. A total of 445 articles were found based on the keywords search using the words "prognosis" and "work related musculoskeletal disorders." Limits were set for the studies published between the years 1995 to 2013. The following data were extracted from the obtained studies: study design, type of data collection, participants, assessment tools and outcomes obtained in the respective study. Based on the eligibility criteria the articles were finalised and the rest of the articles were excluded from the systematic review. Only studies in English language were considered for the review.

3. Results

A total of 445 articles were found from search engines and other sources. After excluding irrelevant studies, other languages and duplication a total of 87 studies was considered for further review. After further review of the 87 papers only 15 studies were considered for the final review and other papers on non work related musculoskeletal disorders were excluded. Out of the 15 studies one study described the severity of WRMSD by a questionnaire as the predictor of the prognosis. One study discussed about various predictors and its relation with symptoms in chronic fatigue syndrome. Most of the studies described about the prognosis of a specific WRMSD. One study described the prognosis of opioid treatment in WRMSD's.

4. Discussion

Studies suggested that severity of the WRMSD had an effect on activities of daily living (ADL). The ADLs were impaired as the severity and complexity of the discomfort increased and this could be a possible predictor of the prognosis. Intensity of pain, work related stress, duration of exposure to any particular activity, neuropathic pain, sleeplessness were considered as predictors of prognosis in WRMSD. A study revealed that chronic opioid use starting after a WRMSD is a predictor of less successful outcomes for patients whose final treatment intervention was an interdisciplinary functional restoration program. In chronic fatigue syndrome older age, high fatigue severity, and higher scores on the dimensions of psychological wellbeing, functional impairment, social functioning, sleep problems, concentration problems, sense of control over symptoms, and subjective experience were considered as predictors of fatigue severity.
References


