ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The objective of this study was to assess the worker’s health (WH) risk, focused on sustainable development in a work context and based on the development and application of the Worker’s Health Risk Index (WHRI) in the oil extraction and production industry in Bahia, Brazil.

**Design/methodology/approach:** The sample, obtained by quota sampling, comprised 965 participants. The development stage integrated a group of 10 specialists, including physicians, nurses, nutritionists, dentists and physical educators, all specialists in the WH area, as well as 3 experts in the area of data science. Three risk ranges were defined: “Low”, “Moderate” and “High”.

**Findings:** The **WHRI** validation revealed reliability and reproducibility, as well as the ability to identify differences among the population studied according to sex, age group and education level. The results indicate that the WH risk is higher in men, aged above 50 years old and with a low level of education \((p < 0.001)\). 74% of the participants are in the “Low”, 21% in the “Moderate” and 5% in the “High” risk ranges. High-risk workers are also those with diabetes mellitus, altered triglyceride or glycemia levels, hypertension, poor oral hygiene and periodontal conditions, tobacco use, low levels of physical activity (all with \(p < 0.05\)), or alcohol abuse.

**Originality/Value:** The **WHRI**’s major contribution is to make available a useful tool for the identification of WH risk, helping to define clearer health promotion, prevention and intervention policies in the context of WH.

**Keywords:** Index development. Worker’s health risk index (**WHRI**). Sustainable working conditions. Risk management
RESUMO

Objetivo: O objetivo deste estudo foi o de avaliar o risco em saúde do trabalhador, com foco no desenvolvimento sustentável em contexto de trabalho e com base no desenvolvimento e aplicação do Índice de Risco à Saúde do Trabalhador (WHRI) numa indústria de extração e produção de petróleo na Bahia, Brasil.

Desenho / metodologia / abordagem: A amostra, obtida por amostragem por cotas, é composta por 965 participantes. A etapa de desenvolvimento integrou um grupo de 10 especialistas, entre os quais médicos, enfermeiros, nutricionistas, dentistas e educadores físicos, todos especialistas na área da saúde do trabalhador, além de 3 especialistas na área de ciência dos dados. Três faixas de risco foram definidas: “Baixo”, “Moderado” e “Alto”.

Resultados: A validação do WHRI revelou confiabilidade e reprodutibilidade, bem como capacidade de identificar diferenças entre a população estudada, segundo sexo, faixa etária e escolaridade. Os resultados indicam que o risco em saúde do trabalhador é maior em homens, com idade acima de 50 anos e baixa escolaridade ($p < 0,001$). 74% dos participantes estão na faixa de risco “Baixo”, 21% na “Moderada” e 5% nas faixa de risco “Alto”. Trabalhadores de alto risco são aqueles com diabetes mellitus, triglicerídeos, glicemia e hipertensão alteradas, higiene oral e condição periodontal precárias, tabagismo, menos ativos fisicamente e níveis mais elevados de abstenção (todos com $p < 0,05$).

Originalidade: A principal contribuição do WHRI é o de disponibilizar uma ferramenta útil para a identificação do risco em saúde do trabalhador, contribuindo para definir políticas mais claras de promoção, prevenção e intervenção em saúde no contexto laboral.

Palavras-chave: Desenvolvimento de índices. Índice de risco em saúde do trabalhador (WHRI). Condições de trabalho sustentáveis. Gerenciamento de riscos

1 INTRODUCTION

The continued growth of the world’s population, the scarcity of resources and the threat of climate change expose numerous environmental and social problems. The Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations (UN) Member States in 2015 (Guerra & Brito Lourenço, 2018; United Nations, 2015), constitute a plan of action for people, for the planet and for prosperity. A total of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 targets and 230 global indicators were defined in order to enable monitoring of their implementation by 2030. The objectives and targets are intended to stimulate action in areas of critical importance to humanity and to the planet. Among these objectives, five of them are directly related to health and labour/employment issues, namely SDGs 2, 3, 6, 8 and 11, which, being related, are aimed at guaranteeing access to quality health and promoting well-being for all, at all ages, contemplating the implementation of sustainable economic growth strategies, inclusive and sustainable, full and productive employment and decent work for all, respectively (Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2015; United Nations General Assembly, 2018). In the same line of work, the European Union Strategic Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 (Eurofound, 2015b, 2015a; Eurofound and EU-OHSA, 2014) identifies important challenges and objectives, including improvements in health and safety rules, prevention of occupational diseases, and issues related to an aging workforce. Risk prevention and the promotion of safer and healthier conditions in the workplace are essential not only to improve the quality of employment and working conditions, but also to promote competitiveness (Dinis et al., 2019). Keeping workers healthy has a direct and quantifiable positive impact on productivity, contributing to improving the sustainability of social security systems (European Comission, 2010, 2014; World Health Organisation, 2016).

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the socioeconomic impact of chronic diseases is increasing and is considered a problem for world public health. In addition to premature...
deaths, Non-communicable Chronic Diseases (NCDs) are responsible for work disability, reduced family incomes and reduced productivity. In Brazil, in considering deaths, absenteeism and presenteeism, the impact of NCDs represented 5.4% of the 2015 gross domestic product (GDP) (USD 129.8 billion), and projections indicate that this number will reach 5.8% of the GDP in 2030 (USD 184 billion). This same study (Bloom et al., 2011) revealed that economic costs related to early retirement are projected to reach 2.9% in 2030, compared to 2.4% in 2015. The WHO indicator “Years of Life Lost by Disability” (YLD) (Rasmussen et al., 2015) showed Brazil as the country with the highest spending on chronic diseases (150 YLD) when compared to the other 20 countries in the same study. In a scenario of significant economic impact on health systems, health care regulation appears as a way to provide economic efficiency (Salgado, 2003) and can be understood as an essential instrument for maintaining the balance of a health system (Vilarins et al., 2012). Thus, regulation is seen as a set of actions that direct, adjust, facilitate or limit certain processes to achieve results that may be related to meeting the most pressing needs of a population (Schilling et al., 2006). In this sense, risk stratification of health system users is a central element of the health management of a population. The stratification of the population into subpopulations leads to the identification of users with similar needs in order to distribute specific resources to each group. When a population is not stratified by risk, care can be provided to those at lower risk and/or over-care instead of to those at higher risk, resulting in ineffective and inefficient attention (Mendes, 2015). An important model for the organisation of care regulation is the Risk Pyramid Model (RPM), which operationalises the risk stratification of non-acute chronic conditions, relying heavily on the risk stratification of the population and defining intervention strategies for self-care and in professional care. The application of the RPM in health care has several practical applications, guiding an adequate distribution of self-care, professional care and specialised care in the agenda of health professionals (Pan American Health Organization, 2012).

In a world scenario where people spend most of their day at work, it is important to make the work context safe and conducive to the quality of life and health. Thus, both public and private institutions must develop and implement interdisciplinary mechanisms and interventions in the same direction (Almeida, 2000; Task Force on Community Preventive Services, 2010; Viterbo et al., 2018; Viterbo, Dinis, Vidal, et al., 2019), contributing to the implementation of the SDGs at the micro level. WHO proposes that the action on risk factors has the potential to produce sustainable improvement in the health of populations, and there are many ways to address this.

However, for risk reduction, two main approaches stand out: identifying high-risk people, those most likely to benefit from health interventions, and identifying the risk across the population, regardless of the risk and potential benefit of each individual (World Health Organization (WHO), 2009). Although the RPM is a relevant model for stratifying populations in risk ranges, their theoretical frameworks do not describe the methodology that determines their classes. Still at this level, other existing indices are either not accessible for application, such as the Total Health Index (THI) Assessment (Morneau Shepell, 2019), or are very focused on measuring work performance anchored to OHSAS 18001 and ISO 14001 standards, thus neglecting, in part, the worker’s personal dimension and health, as an indicator resulting from a set of related factors, such as the Occupational Health Index (OHI) (Kulkarni, 2017). In addition to existing indices, some initiatives have emphasised worker’s well-being concerns, such as the International Social Security Association’s “Vision Zero” initiative (International Social Security Association, 2019), which is a transformational approach to prevention by integrating dimensions of safety, health and well-being at work, and The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health’s “Total Worker Health®” initiative (The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 2019), which - anchored in a holistic approach to workers and
their well-being - takes into account the policies and actions that address occupational risk factors, based not only on the sole well-being of the worker but rather on the common good at work, i.e., workers, employers.

Although there are indices and initiatives that deal with the theme, such as those mentioned above, there is a knowledge gap in occupational health in terms of a method that - in addition to considering aspects related to social determinants of health, global burden of disease, environmental aspects, the SDGs and, particularly, the working conditions affecting the individual’s health - also makes it possible to extract the population into risk classes, which becomes absolutely necessary. Specifically, the International Labour Organization (2019) establishes the relevant SDG targets related to the future of work, SDG 8 “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, including target 8.8 - “Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, particularly women migrants, and those in precarious employment”, and it is specifically in this scope where the WHRI seeks to be relevant.

Since the Earth Summit in 1992, the concept of sustainable development received several contributions addressing the dimensional characterization (Gibson, 2006). The main goals are based on economy, environment and equity or people, planet and profit, highlighted by Elkington (1999). During this period, and until current days, organizations have been called to sign a global commitment to implement sustainability into their dynamics (Marimon et al., 2012). This implied to include sustainability issues in business strategies, implementing specific measures and assessing the factors which enable change in the work environment to contribute to social development. Sustainable development management appears as a model from which organizations apply all its resources to improve organizational and technological development (Ian et al., 2010). The main difference in this sustainable development management model is that organizations are not only focused on the present but also in the future of society, considering the future impact of their actions. This vision aims to improve the quality of life and is mainly focused on the human dimension, i.e., in the workers. Despite these efforts, Dyllick and Muff (2015) reported that this shared vision of sustainable organizations has not reached a significant goal.

In line with the need for risk stratification and to cover a lack of availability of health, sustainability indicators within the work context and the sustainable development management, this study proposes the Worker’s Health Risk Index (WHRI), which aims to assess the worker’s health (WH) risk, focusing on sustainable development in an oil industry. According to Munisteri & Taha (2014) the oil industry generated revenue of around USD 5 trillion in 2013 and employed around 1.34 million individuals worldwide. The oil industry environment has been described as dangerous, arduous and socially isolating. It involves several environmental and organizational factors that act as potential sources of stress and health threats that should be minimized with effective management measures (Ulleberg & Rundmo, 1997).

This approach assumes that the WH results from a set of associations between environment, human health and working relationships, which, interrelated, contribute to the general health status of the working population. For this reason, and in an interdisciplinary perspective, the development of an index such as the WHRI is considered relevant, enabling the integral promotion of health in the collective work environment, which will allow its widespread application in various working contexts without direct additional associated costs.
2 METHODOLOGY

2.1. Study design

The research is based on a strong methodological component, carried out in the period of August to October 2018, in the worker’s occupational health service in the oil extraction and production industry in Bahia, Brazil. The study involved 10 specialists, all of whom are active in the WH field with a minimum of five years of interdisciplinary experience, and three data science experts analysing the database composed by population (N = 1275 workers) and sample (quota sampling) (n = 965 workers). Data were collected during the annual occupational assessment of the subjects, in the appropriate offices, by professionals of medicine, nursing, nutrition, dentistry and physical education with vast experience in the specific area of work. All calls were performed in an integrated, single shift and lasted an average of 40 min with each professional. The Interdisciplinary Worker’s Health Approach Instrument (IWHAI) (Viterbo, Dinis, Costa, et al., 2019), previously validated, was used for data collection purposes. Data were treated to standardise variable names, and a randomly generated code was created to ensure anonymity of the study participants. To assess the WHRI’s ability to identify differences/associations among the participants by sex, age group and educational level, the Chi-square test was applied (α = 5%).

In all stages of the study, the recommendations and guidelines of Resolution 466/2012 of the Brazilian Ministry of Health, on ethical aspects regulating research with human beings, were followed. The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Bahiana School of Medicine and Public Health and CAAE no. 84318218.2.0000.5544. Before participating in the study, all subjects gave their informed consent for inclusion.

Figure 1 details the WHRI development steps.
2.2 WHRI indicators’ selection

Based on the literature review, 6 dimensions, 44 indicators and 220 sub-indices, integrating the IWHAI (Viterbo, Dinis, Costa, et al., 2019) were included and IWHAI was used as an instrument for data collection. IWHAI is also based on an interdisciplinary approach, considering the possibility of occurrence of a health problem, without necessarily describing the health aggravation and the probability of occurrence. To the IWHAI structure, the “Personal factor” dimension was added, corresponding to the “Age group” indicator and the respective sub-indices. For the definition of the variables, aspects related to social determinants were considered, i.e., health (Commission on Social Determinants of Health, 2008; Graham & White, 2016; Kelly et al., 2007), global disease burden (Forouzanfar et al., 2016; Malta et al., 2017; Organization, 2009), environmental aspects (Bini & Bech, 2014), SGDs (United Nations, 2015) and, in particular, working conditions affecting the health of the individual. The WHRI was coded in closed responses with an interval scale of 0 to 4, where zero represents non-existent or inadequate risk control and four represents optimal risk control, with the following graduation: 0 - non-existent or inadequate; 1 - tolerable; 2 - reasonable; 3 - good and 4 - excellent.

The WHRI’s alignment with the SDGs (United Nations, 2015), UN indicators (Leadership Council of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2015) and Brazilian indicators for sustainable development (IBGE - Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2019) are presented in Table 1.
### Table 1. WHRI’s alignment with SDGs, and UN and Brazil Indicators

| SDGs | WHRI Indicator                              | UN Indicator | Brazil Indicator |
|------|--------------------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 2    | Energy balance intake                       | 2.7          | ni              |
|      | Simple carbohydrate intake                  | 2.8          | ni              |
|      | Work environment health conditions          | nci          | nd              |
|      | Family relationships                        | nci          | ni              |
|      | Social aspects - leisure                    | nci          | ni              |
|      | Self-care level                             | nci          | ni              |
|      | Dyslipidemia                                | 23           | ni              |
|      | Diabetes mellitus                           | 23           | uac             |
|      | Altered glycaemia                           | 3.23         | ni              |
|      | Arterial hypertension                       | 3.18         | ni              |
|      | Blood pressure                              | 23           | ni              |
|      | Tobacco use                                 | 30           | uac             |
|      | Musculoskeletal pathology                   | nci          | uac             |
|      | Psychiatric pathology                       | 28           | ni              |
|      | Stress level and symptoms                   | 28           | ni              |
|      | Saturated lipids intake                     | 3.23         | ni              |
|      | Sodium mineral intake                       | 3.24         | ni              |
|      | Fibre intake                                | 3.25         | ni              |
|      | Alcohol use                                 | 3.19         | uac             |
| 3    | Level of food knowledge                     | nci          | ni              |
|      | Body weight condition                       | 24           | ni              |
|      | Altered triglycerides                       | 23           | ni              |
|      | Oral hygiene quality                        | nci          | ni              |
|      | Periodontal condition                       | nci          | ni              |
|      | Periodontal disease                         | nci          | ni              |
|      | Caries                                      | nci          | ni              |
|      | Oral lesion on soft or hard tissues         | nci          | ni              |
|      | Bruxism                                     | nci          | ni              |
|      | Physical activity level                     | 3.22         | ni              |
|      | Contemplation stage for physical activity practice | nci     | ni              |
|      | Feeling of pain                             | nci          | ni              |
|      | Cardiorespiratory fitness                   | nci          | ni              |
|      | Abdominal strength level                    | nci          | ni              |
|      | Flexibility level                           | nci          | ni              |
|      | Manual gripping force                       | nci          | ni              |
|      | Age Group                                   | nci          | ni              |
| 6    | Pests and vectors                           | nci          | uac             |
|      | Drinking water Quality                      | 45           | pr              |
| 8    | Environmental hazards exposure (physical, chemical and biological agents) | 57           | uac             |
|      | Ergonomic risks - physical aspects          | 57           | uac             |
|      | Ergonomic risks - organizational aspects    | 57           | uac             |
|      | Work accident                               | nci          | uac             |
|      | Work-related absenteeism                     | nci          | ni              |
| 11   | Air quality                                 | 69           | nd              |

Note: nci - there is no UN corresponding indicator; ni - no Brazil indicator; nd - no data; uac - indicator under analysis/construction; pr - produced indicator.
In Table 1, the indicators selected to be included in the WHRI are aligned with some of the SDGs and corresponding UN indicators (if any). The last column shows the correspondence of the WHRI indicators with the Brazilian indicators (if any). In the latter case, and based on the consultation of the Brazil Indicators for SDGs, the Brazil indicators are divided into the following: according to the IBGE (IBGE - Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2019), this indicator does not apply to Brazil (ni), there is not enough data in Brazil to construct the indicator (nd); the indicator is under construction (uac); or the indicator already exists and is produced (pr). This table, inspired by the construction of the WeGlx (Wellbeing Global Index) (Oliveira, Vidal, Viterbo, et al., 2020), allows one to understand how the indicators that make up the WHRI can help in monitoring the SDG targets and, in part, address the shortcomings in providing indicators on Brazilian reality, although in a specific context, such as the worker in the oil industry.

The 3 data science experts defined the parameters’ values to be applied in all WHRI development steps, as detailed in Table 2.

As shown in Figure 1 and Table 2, the first parameter refers to the Dimension Weight (W), comprising an integer number, ranging from 0 to 5. The highest value, i.e., \( W = 5 \), characterises the dimension whose indicators have a major impact on the interdisciplinary assessment, corresponding to the medicine dimension. The second parameter corresponds to the criticality for each indicator, which was defined by the Critical Sub-index (Ci), ranging from 0 to 2. The third parameter is the Associated Indicator (Ai), establishing the association between indicators. As an example, there is the feeling of pain indicator, which has Ci at level 2, so the indicator will be considered critical whenever one of the sub-indices 0, 1 or 2 is chosen, with no difference between these scores. Feeling of pain is associated with musculoskeletal pathology and ergonomic risks, physical aspects indicators, which means that it is influenced by them and can be either positive or negative.
Table 2. WHRI dimensions, indicators and associated indicators

| Dimension        | Code | Indicator                                      | CI | Ai |
|------------------|------|-----------------------------------------------|----|----|
| Personal factor  |      |                                               |    |    |
| Dentistry        | 0    | G01 Age group                                 |    |    |
| O02              | Oral hygiene quality                         |    |    |
| O03              | Periodontal condition                        | 0  |    |
| O04              | Periodontal disease                          | 1  | M06|
| O05              | Caries                                        | 0  | N02|
| O06              | Oral lesion on soft or hard tissues          | 0  | M06|
| O07              | Bruxism                                       |    | M09|
| Nutrition        | 1    |                                               |    |    |
| N01              | Energy balance intake                         | 0  | P01|
| N02              | Simple carbohydrate intake                    |    |    |
| N03              | Saturated lipids intake                       | 0  |    |
| N04              | Sodium mineral intake                         | 0  |    |
| N05              | Fibre intake                                  |    |    |
| N06              | Alcohol use                                   | 0  | E05|
| N07              | Level of food knowledge                       |    | E06|
| N08              | Body weight condition                         |    |    |
| N09              | Altered triglycerides                         | 0  | N06|
| Physical education| 2    |                                               |    |    |
| P01              | Physical activity level                       | 0  | E06|
| P02              | Contemplation stage for physical activity     | 1  | E07|
| P03              | Feeling of pain                               |    |    |
| P04              | Cardiorespiratory fitness                     |    |    |
| P05              | Abdominal strength level                      |    |    |
| P06              | Flexibility level                             |    |    |
| P07              | Manual gripping force                         |    |    |
| Nursing          | 3    |                                               |    |    |
| E01              | Environmental hazards exposure (physical,     | 1  |    |
| E02              | chemical and biological agents)              |    |    |
| E03              | Ergonomic risks - physical aspects            | 1  |    |
| E04              | Work environment health conditions             | 0  |    |
| E05              | Family relationships                          |    |    |
| E06              | Social aspects - leisure                      |    |    |
| E07              | Self-care level                               | 1  | E05|
| E08              | Pests and vectors                             |    | E04|
| E09              | Drinking water Quality                        |    | E04|
| E10              | Air quality                                   |    | E04|
| E11              | Work accident                                 |    | E02|
| E12              | Work-related absenteeism                      |    | P03|
| Medicine         | 4    |                                               |    |    |
| M01              | Dyslipidemia                                   | 0  | N03|
| M02              | Diabetes mellitus                             | 2  | N02|
| M03              | Altered glycemia                              | 1  | N02|
| M04              | Arterial hypertension                         | 0  | N04|
| M05              | Altered blood pressure                        | 1  | N04|
| M06              | Use of tobacco                                | 1  |    |
| M07              | Musculoskeletal pathology                     | 0  |    |
| M08              | Psychiatric pathology                         | 1  |    |
| M09              | Stress level and symptoms                     | 0  | N06|

Note: W - Dimension weight; CI - Critical sub-index; Ai - Associated indicator.
2.3. **WHRI calculations**

2.3.1. **Stage 1: Multidisciplinary Risk**

The development of the WHRI calculation was mainly based on the model of calculation of the potential risk by Leite and Dourado (2012) and Navarro (2009). Also, the studies from Nishijima and Biasoto (2013), Brilhantes and Caldas (1999), Castiel and collaborators (2010) and also Finch (2003) have contributed to the WHRI calculation. The Multidisciplinary Risk (Mr) is the value calculated from a weighted average of the sub-indices filled in the indicators of each dimension, added by a factor calculated from the number of risk associations that each indicator had with other dimensions, or with the dimension itself. The worker will have an Mr score for 5 dimensions, i.e., medicine, nursing, physical education, nutrition and dentistry, and to calculate it, all WHRI indicators must be filled. The Mr calculation is shown in Equation 1.

\[
Mr = \left( \frac{\log(W+1)}{(W+Q)} \right) + \left\{ R + \left[ A_i \left( \frac{0.05}{T} \right) \right] \right\}
\]

(1)

Where \( W \) is the dimension weight, \( Q \) is the number of dimensions integrating disciplinary care, \( I \) is the number of indicators by dimension, \( R \) is the reference value, detailed below, \( A \) is the number of indicators with sub-index ranging from 0 to 2, i.e., \( A_i \), associated with some dimension indicator, considering all the dimensions assessed for a particular individual, and \( T \) is the number of total associations between indicators of all dimensions. 0.05 is a constant responsible for a bigger data detail of the negative weights of the associated indicators. \( R = 0.95 \), when there is at least one indicator in the dimension whose sub-index is less than or equal to the value defined as critical (see Table 2, critical sub-index \( C_i \)), 0.95 is a constant that limits the maximum that the Mr can reach before the \( A_i \). In all other cases, \( R = 0.95 - M/4.3 \), where \( M \) is the sub-indices arithmetic mean, and 4.3 is a constant responsible for increasing the WHRI’s accuracy, increasing its probability of identity.

2.3.2 Stage 2 – Worker’s Health Risk Index (WHRI)

The WHRI is calculated from the Mr mean (Equation 1) of the worker, according to Equation 2. Each worker will have a specific WHRI score, and the same result will not be possible for more than one individual.

\[
WHRI = \left( \frac{0.95 - \left( \frac{Is}{3.3} \right)}{Q+1} \right) + \sum Mr
\]

(2)

Where \( Is \) is the indicator corresponding to the subject’s age group (see Table 3), \( Mr \) is the multidisciplinary risk, \( Q \) is the number of dimensions integrating disciplinary care, 0.95 is a constant that limits the maximum that the Mr can reach before the \( A_i \), and the difference between 4.3, the constant from Equation 1, and 1, i.e., equal to 3.3, is another constant responsible for making the sum of Mr proportional to the calculation of the age dimension.
### Table 3. Indicator assigned to the subject’s age group

| Age Group   | Is |
|-------------|----|
| $A_s \geq 60$ | 0  |
| $50 \leq A_s < 60$ | 1  |
| $40 \leq A_s < 50$ | 2  |
| $30 \leq A_s < 40$ | 3  |
| $A_s < 30$ | 4  |

Note: $A_s$ is the age of the subject; Is is the indicator corresponding to the subject’s age group.

#### 2.3.3 Example of WHRI calculation

Each specialist, i.e., physician, nurse, nutritionist, dentist and physical educator, is responsible for the data collected in their respective dimensions. Table 4 presents the results obtained in the assessment of a worker relating the Nursing dimension, as an example.

### Table 4. Nursing indicators with simulated responses to their sub-index

| Indicator Code | Sub-Index |
|----------------|-----------|
| E01            | 3         |
| E02            | 1         |
| E03            | 3         |
| E04            | 1         |
| E05            | 1         |
| E06            | 3         |
| E07            | 3         |
| E08            | 1         |
| E09            | 2         |
| E10            | 3         |
| E11            | 4         |
| E12            | 1         |

For the calculation of the value of $Mr$ it is necessary to extract the values of $W$, $I$, $M$, $A$, $R$, $Q$, and $T$ of each dimension, already defined in Equation 1. In the example of the Nursing dimension, the values to use are: $W = 4$ (predefined according to Table 2 for the Nursing dimension), $I = 12$, $M = 2.17$, $A = 5$, $R = 0.95$ (as explained before). The values of $Q$ and $T$ were predefined by the method, as follows: $Q = 5$ and $T = 42$. Applying all values to Equation 1, the obtained result is $Mr = 0.9608$. The same calculations are made for each dimension, except for the personal factor dimension. The results are presented in Table 5.
To complete the WHRI calculation it is necessary to extract the values of $I_s$, $Q$ and $\sum Mr$, as defined in Equation 2. Considering that the worker in the example is 52 years old, the value of $I_s$ to be used is $I_s = 1$ (Table 3), with $Q = 5$ (as indicated above) and $\sum Mr = 4.2411$ (sum of all Mr values in Table 5). Applying all values to Equation 2, the obtained result is $WHRI = 0.8146$ (High-risk).

2.4 WHRI validity

In WHRI internal validation, excellent Kappa coefficient ($k$) (Landis & Koch, 1977) values were found, namely for its applicability ($k = 0.88$), clarity ($k = 0.80$) and relevance ($k = 0.82$). In addition, moderate and strong positive associations were identified among the variables, using the Spearman’s correlation coefficient ($r_s$), i.e., ranging from $r_s = 0.23$ to $0.79$ ($p < 0.01$). From the multivariate analysis, i.e., factor analysis, 14 components were extracted, explaining 62.6% of the data variability (KMO = 0.66; Bartlett’s test: $x^2 = 5252.03$, $p < 0.001$). The reliability obtained was moderate to high, i.e., Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha$) is 0.61, as confirmed by other studies (Hair et al., 2003; Landis & Koch, 1977; Ruiz Bolívar, 2002), and its reproducibility is also confirmed by the reasonable value of the intraclass correlation coefficient (0.61; 95% Confidence Interval = 0.562–0.652, $p < 0.001$). The Kruskal–Wallis test was used to compare the sub-indices’ medians of the three risk ranges and to verify if the WHRI is able to identify differences between the risk ranges.

2.4.1 WHRI application

The WHRI was applied to a sample of 965 workers, where men (91.6%), aged 50-59 years (43.6%) and with a complete secondary level of education (60.4%) prevailed. The sample does not differ from the population in terms of the distribution of the percentages by sex ($p > 0.05$) and age group ($p > 0.05$), contributing to a more robust analysis and also allowing one to infer the results found for the population (see Table 6).
2.4.2. WHRI Risk range

In order to transform the data generated from the WHRI calculations into information that supports decision-making in the WH field, specialists and data experts met to define three distinct risk ranges, according to Table 7.

Table 7. WHRI risk range

| Risk range  | WHRI reference value |
|-------------|----------------------|
| Low         | WHRI < 0.530         |
| Moderate    | 0.530 ≤ WHRI < 0.662 |
| High        | ≥ 0.662              |

As a theoretical basis for the definition of the risk range, models by the Leeds Department of Health (2005), Leutz (1999), Porter and collaborators (2008) and Mendes (2012) that stratify the population by risk levels were used. The following classifications were considered:

**Low-risk:** In this range, the risk value varies from 0.007 to a defined value of 0.529. Individuals who have these WHRI values are considered to be at low WH risk, particularly for behavioural risks (Committee on Health and Behavior: Research, Practice and Policy, 2001) and with needs for interventions related to health promotion actions (Aust & Ducki, 2004; Hendriksen et al., 2016; Meng et al., 2017).

**Moderate-risk:** In this range, the risk value varies between the lower limits of 0.530 and the higher limits of 0.661. Individuals with these WHRI values are considered to be at moderate WH risk, specifically in terms of biopsychosocial and environmental risks (Dinis, 2016; Yarahmadi et al., 2016) and with needs for interventions related to health prevention actions (Verra et al., 2019; World Health Organization, 2010, 2016).

**High-risk:** In this range, the value is above the acceptability limit of 0.662. Individuals who present these WHRI values are considered to be at high WH risk and need interventions related to complex health care actions (Kompier, M. A. J. Kristensen, 2001).
3 RESULTS

The WHRI was applied in the study sample (965 workers). Figure 2 shows the distribution of the percentage of workers in each risk range.

![WHRI risk range by workers' number and relative frequencies (%)](image)

5.1% of the workers were classified as high-risk, 20.6% as moderate-risk and 74.3% as low-risk. The WHRI graphical distribution demonstrates that each individual has a value that is not repeated, confirming the accuracy of the calculations.

In addition to WHRI stratifying the worker population as to health risk, it enables the optimisation of the provision of services appropriate to the needs of the worker. The need for professional care is related to the multidisciplinary risk classification (Mr) in the high, medium or low risk ranges. For the presentation of the results, all Mr’s were considered in the high-risk range, i.e., when the Mr of one dimension has high risk, it means that the worker needs the corresponding professional attention. Figure 3 shows the distribution of the number of health professionals needed for intervention by risk range. This is a particularly important factor to be considered with economic implications, enabling a better management of the funds available.
It can be observed that 79% of the individuals classified as high-risk need support from more than four health professionals, while 86% of those classified as moderate-risk require care from three to four professionals, and finally 87% of workers who are low-risk individuals need attention from up to three health professionals.

The WHRI risk range distribution was compared by sex, age group and education level of the sample, according to Table 8.
Table 8. WHRI risk range comparison by sample sociodemographic characteristics

|                      | Low-risk    | Moderate-risk | High-risk    |
|----------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| n (%)                | n (%)       | n (%)         | p            |
| **Sex**              |             |               |              |
| Male                 | 644 (72.9)  | 191 (21.6)    | 49 (5.5)     | 0.002 |
| Female               | 73 (90.1)   | 8 (9.9)       | 0 (0.0)      |       |
| **Age group**        |             |               |              |
| ≤ 29                 | 44 (100)    | 0 (0.0)       | 0 (0.0)      |       |
| 30 to 39             | 247 (94.6)  | 13 (5.0)      | 1 (0.0)      |       |
| 40 to 49             | 173 (82.8)  | 33 (15.8)     | 3 (1.4)      | 0.000 |
| 50 to 59             | 233 (56.8)  | 143 (34.9)    | 34 (8.3)     |       |
| ≥ 60                 | 20 (48.8)   | 10 (24.4)     | 11 (26.8)    |       |
| **Education**        |             |               |              |
| Incomplete intermediate level | 29 (51.8) | 19 (33.9) | 8 (14.3) |       |
| Complete intermediate level | 438 (75.3) | 116 (19.9) | 28 (4.8) |       |
| Incomplete higher level | 28 (84.8) | 4 (12.1) | 1 (3.0) | 0.002 |
| Complete higher level | 124 (78.5) | 28 (17.7) | 6 (3.8) |       |
| Complete higher level with postgraduate degree | 32 (84.2) | 6 (15.8) | 0 (0.0) |       |

The results (Table 8) indicate a heterogeneous distribution of workers across the three risk ranges. In the high-risk range there are predominantly male workers (p<0.05), aged 50 or older (p<0.05) and with complete or incomplete intermediate education levels (p<0.05).

Table 9 presents the prevalence of the sub-indices of each indicator by risk range and the respective p-value.
Table 9. Sub-indices prevalence by risk range

| Dimension       | Code | Age group                  | Risk Range | p    |
|-----------------|------|----------------------------|------------|------|
|                 |      |                            | Low        | Medium | High |      |
| Dentistry       |      |                            |            |        |      |      |
|                 | O02  | Oral hygiene quality       | 4 (36.9)   | 2 (44.7) | 2 (61.2) | 0.001 |
|                 | O03  | Periodontal condition      | 4 (41.2)   | 1 (41.2) | 1 (57.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | O04  | Periodontal disease        | 3 (55.6)   | 2 (50.0) | 2 (42.9) | 0.126 |
|                 | O05  | Caries                     | 1 (46.1)   | 1 (63.6) | 1 (60.0) | 0.001 |
|                 | O06  | Oral lesion on soft or hard tissues | 4 (100) | 4 (100) | 1 (100) | 0.480 |
|                 | O07  | Bruxism                    | 2 (54.2)   | 3 (47.3) | 2 (60.0) | 0.335 |
| Nutrition       | N01  | Energy balance intake      | 3 (54.0)   | 2 (48.7) | 2 (53.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | N02  | Simple carbohydrate intake | 3 (78.1)   | 3 (68.3) | 3 (65.3) | 0.001 |
|                 | N03  | Saturated lipids intake    | 3 (93.6)   | 3 (91.0) | 3 (87.8) | 0.201 |
|                 | N04  | Sodium mineral intake      | 3 (98.5)   | 3 (98.0) | 3 (100)  | 0.902 |
|                 | N05  | Fibre intake               | 3 (69.8)   | 3 (57.3) | 3 (61.2) | 0.002 |
|                 | N06  | Alcohol use                | 3 (57.9)   | 3 (51.3) | 3 (38.8) | 0.003 |
|                 | N07  | Level of food knowledge    | 3 (59.5)   | 2 (56.3) | 2 (57.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | N08  | Body weight condition      | 2 (47.3)   | 2 (45.7) | 2 (49.0) | 0.002 |
|                 | N09  | Altered triglycerides      | 3 (67.9)   | 3 (43.4) | 1 (40.8) | 0.001 |
| Physical education | P01  | Physical activity level    | 3 (44.8)   | 0 (40.2) | 0 (65.3) | 0.001 |
|                 | P02  | Contemplation stage for physical activity practice | 3 (73.9) | 3 (58.3) | 1 (32.7) | 0.001 |
|                 | P03  | Feeling of pain            | 4 (93.4)   | 4 (67.9) | 4 (79.6) | 0.002 |
|                 | P04  | Cardiorespiratory fitness  | 3 (60.1)   | 3 (63.1) | 3 (77.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | P05  | Abdominal strength level   | 4 (35.6)   | 0 (33.5) | 0 (28.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | P06  | Flexibility level          | 0 (27.9)   | 0 (43.7) | 0 (46.2) | 0.001 |
|                 | P07  | Manual gripping force      | 3 (66.7)   | 3 (65.5) | 3 (63.0) | 0.003 |
| Nursing         | E02  | Ergonomic risks - physical aspects | 3 (81.7) | 3 (68.9) | 3 (63.3) | 0.001 |
|                 | E03  | Ergonomic risks - organisational aspects | 3 (94.9) | 3 (94.9) | 3 (91.8) | 0.956 |
|                 | E04  | Work environment health conditions | 3 (85.1) | 3 (81.1) | 3 (89.8) | 0.259 |
|                 | E05  | Family relationships       | 3 (98.2)   | 3 (96.4) | 3 (87.8) | 0.001 |
|                 | E06  | Social aspects - leisure   | 3 (97.5)   | 3 (96.4) | 3 (100)  | 0.019 |
|                 | E07  | Self-care level            | 3 (54.0)   | 2 (55.1) | 2 (55.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | E08  | Pets and vectors           | 2 (52.2)   | 1 (55.8) | 1 (62.5) | 0.031 |
|                 | E09  | Drinking water quality     | 0 (52.0)   | 0 (54.8) | 0 (60.4) | 0.733 |
|                 | E10  | Air quality                | 3 (862.5)  | 3 (55.3) | 3 (55.1) | 0.147 |
|                 | E11  | Work accident              | 4 (99.6)   | 4 (100)  | 4 (100)  | 0.595 |
|                 | E12  | Work-related absenteeism   | 4 (48.7)   | 2 (32.7) | 2 (32.7) | 0.001 |
| Medicine        | M01  | Dyslipidemia               | 3 (37.2)   | 4 (33.7) | 4 (30.6) | 0.082 |
|                 | M02  | Diabetes mellitus          | 4 (46.7)   | 2 (50.0) | 2 (33.3) | 0.002 |
|                 | M03  | Altered glycermia          | 4 (80.9)   | 4 (72.4) | 4 (80.0) | 0.002 |
|                 | M04  | Arterial hypertension      | 3 (84.6)   | 3 (74.3) | 3 (37.5) | 0.001 |
|                 | M05  | Altered blood pressure     | 4 (50.7)   | 3 (37.2) | 2 (49.0) | 0.001 |
|                 | M06  | Use of tobacco             | 4 (75.0)   | 4 (44.5) | 2 (47.1) | 0.001 |
|                 | M07  | Musculoskeletal pathology  | 4 (49.3)   | 2 (39.4) | 2 (56.3) | 0.001 |
|                 | M08  | Psychiatric pathology      | 4 (47.9)   | 4 (60.0) | 3 (52.1) | 0.165 |
|                 | M09  | Stress level and symptoms  | 4 (91.9)   | 4 (85.7) | 4 (87.5) | 0.021 |

According to Table 9, most of the indicators identify significant differences among the three risk ranges. In the dimension of medicine, nursing, physical and dental activity, the most significant differences are observed, suggesting that workers with higher levels of diabetes mellitus ($p < 0.05$),
altered triglycerides ($p < 0.05$), glycemia ($p < 0.05$), blood pressure ($p < 0.05$) and use of tobacco ($p < 0.05$) are found in the high-risk range. Workers in the high-risk range are also those with poorer oral hygiene ($p < 0.05$) and periodontal conditions ($p < 0.05$) and are the least physically active ($p < 0.05$). For these reasons, these are also the workers with the highest levels of workplace absenteeism ($p < 0.05$).

4 DISCUSSION

In the context of sustainable development, the composite indices are particularly important in the process of monitoring the implementation of the 17 SDGs, aims and scopes, previously contextualised in the introduction section of this text. The WHRI proposes to analyse the WH risk through the combination of interrelated variables that contribute to the final score to be assigned to each individual. A gap in the literature has been identified in the availability of indices that first conceive the WH, covering all its complexity and not facing it as an isolated dimension, and then make it possible to measure WH. This perspective addresses the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach in the WH field, as well as the implementation of health strategies directed towards the demands of each group and/or individual, as reported by Viterbo and collaborators (2019). One of the important highlights of this work is the lack of availability of composite indicators aligned with the SDGs. As confirmed in Table 1, many of the WHRI indicators are not covered by the UN indicators (45.5%), and in Brazil, only 2.3% of indicators are produced. The remaining WHRI indicators do not have Brazilian correspondence (72.7%) or do not have data (4.5%), and all the rest are under construction (20.5%). In this sense, WHRI can contribute as an aggregating index of several indicators aligned with the SDGs, helping in the instrumentation of the WH field in the Brazilian reality, almost without indicators that allow for the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.

In the field of sustainable development management, it has been shown that WHRI contributes to promote sustainable practices within the work context, with implications not only in the economic dimension but in social and health domains of employers and, consequently, in the specific region where the organization is located. As Sheate et al. (2003) highlighted, it is necessary to fully integrate sustainable management practices which encompass economic, social and environmental dimensions. The WHRI supports this contribution by integrating these three main pillars in health management.

With a representative sample of the population, Figure 2 allows one to identify that 74.3% of the population is in the “Low” risk range, 20.6% in the “Moderate” risk range and 5.1% in the “High” risk range. These results are in accordance with the RPM from the Leeds Health Department (2005), which stratifies the Brazilian population into three levels related to the need for health care, and defines that the span from 70-80% represents level 1 (people in simple conditions), that between 20-30% represents level 2 (people in complex conditions), and 1-5% represents level 3 (people in highly complex conditions), as reported by Mendes (2012). Figure 3 demonstrates the WHRI’s ability to optimise company resources by prioritising and targeting health care delivery according to individual and collective needs, as demonstrated by other studies, such as those of the Association of American Medical Colleges (LaPointe, 2018) and also by private institutions such as EY (2017).

Table 8 associates the distribution of the participants in the three risk groups with the socio-demographic characteristics of sex, age group and education level. In all situations, an association is identified, namely: male participants who are more likely to be in the “High” risk range ($p < 0.01$), as well as individuals with more than 50 years of age ($p < 0.001$), as stated by Jousilahti and collaborators (1999), Regitz-zagrosek (2012), Niccoli and Partridge (2012), Dhingra and Vasan (2012) and Maurer (2003). In line with these results, an education level below the university degree is also
a risk factor ($p<0.01$) (Hahn & Truman, 2015; Johnston, 2019; Vidal et al., 2018, 2019). Regarding this aspect, the WHRI makes a full and integrated diagnosis of the health condition of each individual and the community, enabling the construction of health education actions directed specifically to each audience and thereby increasing the effectiveness of prevention and promotion of health through knowledge of their own health condition.

In the high-risk range (Table 9) there are workers with worse levels in the critical indicators for their health, particularly those related to the medical field, such as glycemia, blood pressure and diabetes, which, when associated with sedentary lifestyles and consumption of harmful substances such as tobacco and alcohol, lead to the development of chronic conditions that severely affect their health and productivity at work, as already mentioned by Farhud (2015), Oliveira and collaborators (2020) in previous studies. Severe periodontal conditions are also associated with the consumption of tobacco, alcohol, diabetes, and foods rich in sugar, as already identified by Braga and colleagues (2009) and Llambés and colleagues (2015).

5 CONCLUSIONS

The importance of composite indices that make it possible to quantify a phenomenon of difficult measurement, such as WH, is visible in the efforts of several world organisations, as in the case of the UN with the publication of Agenda 2030. As a multidimensional phenomenon with different impacts in distinct quarters of life in society, the WH field implies a plural look at it through the combination of variables that positively and negatively interfere in health. The application of the WHRI in the WH context allowed for the validity of the WHRI in identifying the percentage of workers in the “low”, “moderate” and “high” defined risk ranges. The WHRI’s robustness is also visible in the ability to identify differences among workers’ sociodemographic characteristics ($p<0.001$), helping to define health policies in the workplace that promote overall WH and also contribute to the increase of worker’s productivity and associated sustainable development. It was verified that the sex, age and education level influence the WH risk, being higher in men over 50 years old and with a low educational level ($p<0.001$), as noted by the World Health Organization in several reports. The fact that 74% of workers are in the “low” risk range does not mean that they should be considered as free to develop the disease, and consequently, it is crucial to monitor WH. This result is of fundamental importance for the oil industry studied, as oil production in old fields such as Bahia, Brazil is declining, leading to an economic scenario of business resource constraints. The application of a tool such as WHRI enables the definition of risk management strategies aimed at the better use of economic resources to match care resources in different situations.

From this work, it is important to focus on actions centred on promotion, i.e., “low-risk”, prevention, i.e., “moderate-risk”, and, above all, intervention, i.e., “high-risk”, so that the work context, as a dominant dimension in the everyday life of individuals, may be assumed as an increasingly empowering space in terms of well-being and healthy lifestyles.

The WHRI is considered a reliable tool, being an innovation for the WH interdisciplinary approach in different labour contexts. Another important expected contribution of WHRI is the reduction of WH costs, considering that WHRI acts simultaneously in disease prevention and health maintenance, and for this reason, deepening the Return on Investment (ROI) calculation in future studies is recommended. Although WHRI is valid and reproducible, three main limitations must be considered: (i) the need to maintain an interdisciplinary team that is able to respond to the various dimensions of the index, (ii) the existence of minimal environmental and health monitoring and (iii) the need to increase and diversify the sample, namely in the sex and age dimensions, to allow a
reliable and reproducible external validation. This methodology implies further studies, in distinct labour contexts, to verify that the proposed method is also useful in disease prevention and health promotion within the work context.

WHRI can be applied to assess the risks of WH in other industries through periodic worker assessments that cover medicine, nursing, nutrition, dentistry and physical education in an interdisciplinary approach. This tool enables WHRI indicators to be addressed by healthcare professionals, automatically generating the worker health risk value for each worker, as well as generating information that relates results through graphs. Also, this tool contributes to promote sustainable development management practices in organizations of big dimension, which is a key goal in the current corporate sustainability world scenario.

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| 2. Development of hypotheses or research questions (empirical studies)       | √          | √          | √          |            |            |
| 3. Development of theoretical propositions (theoretical work)               | √          | √          | √          |            |            |
| 4. Theoretical foundation / Literature review                                | √          | √          | √          |            |            |
| 5. Definition of methodological procedures                                   | √          | √          | √          |            |            |
| 6. Data collection                                                           | √          |            |            |            |            |
| 7. Statistical analysis                                                      |            |            |            | √          |            |
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