

## **Work Ability Index (WAI) and Its Health-Related Detriments among Iranian Farmers Working in the Small Farm Enterprises**

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**Abstract :** This study aimed to determine the Work Ability Index (WAI) and examine the influence of health dimensions and demographic variables on the work ability of Iranian farmers working in small farm enterprises. A cross-sectional study was conducted among 294 male farmers. The WAI and SF-36 questionnaires were used to determine work ability and health status. The effect of demographics variables on the work ability index was investigated with the independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA. Also, multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the association between the mean WAI score and the SF-36 scales. The mean WAI score was 35.1 (SD=10.6). One-way ANOVA revealed a significant relationship between the mean WAI and age. Multiple linear regression analysis showed that work ability was more influenced by physical scales of the health dimensions, such as physical function, role-physical, and general health, whereas a lower association was found for mental scales such as mental health. The average WAI was at a moderate work ability level for the sample population of farmers in this study. Based on the WAI guidelines, improvement of work ability and identification of factors affecting it should be considered a priority in interventional programs. Given the influence of health dimensions on WAI, any intervention program for preservation and promotion work ability among the studied farmers should be based on balancing and optimizing the physical and psychosocial work environments, with a special focus on reducing physical work load.

**Keywords :** farmers, SF-36, Work Ability Index (WAI), Iran

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