International Research Journal on Advanced Engineering and Management
https://goldncloudpublications.com
https://doi.org/10.47392/IRJAEM.2024.0358
e ISSN: 2584-2854
Volume: 02
Issue: 08 August 2024
Page No: 2488-2490

Comparative Analysis of Human vs. Machine Stone Polishing Techniques: A Comprehensive Study on Cost, Productivity, Health, and Risk Management

Rajesh Kevat[1], Ankitkumar S. Patel[2], Jayraj V. Solanki[3], Chandresh G. Patel[4]
[1]PG scholar, Department of civil Engineering, Ganpat University Mehsana, Gujarat, India.
[2,3,4]Assistant Professor, Department of civil Engineering, Ganpat University Mehsana, Gujarat, India.
Emails: *kevatrajesh8460@gmail.com[1], asp03@ganpatuniversity.ac.in[2], jvs01@ganpatuniversity.ac.in[3], hodcivil.uvpce@ganpatuniersity.ac.in[4]*

Abstract
Stone polishing is a critical aspect of construction engineering and management, influencing the aesthetic appeal and durability of stone surfaces in various architectural projects. Traditionally reliant on skilled human labor, recent advancements have introduced automated machine-based polishing techniques. This research conducts a thorough comparative analysis of human-operated and machine-based stone polishing methods within construction engineering and management. The study evaluates cost-cutting measures, equipment productivity, human productivity, techniques employed, health considerations, risk analyses, and management strategies associated with both approaches. It scrutinizes initial investment, operational costs, and long-term maintenance expenses to ascertain cost-effectiveness. Throughput, cycle time, and quality consistency are assessed to gauge equipment and human productivity, considering training requirements and downtime. Techniques employed in both methods are examined for their adaptability to diverse surface finishes and project requirements. Furthermore, the research investigates health implications, encompassing ergonomic factors, exposure to hazardous materials, and risk of injuries, alongside risk analysis and management protocols. By synthesizing these findings, the research aims to provide valuable insights for construction engineering and management professionals, facilitating informed decision-making to optimize stone polishing processes while ensuring cost-efficiency, productivity, worker health, and risk mitigation in construction projects.

Keywords: *Stone Polishing, Construction Engineering, Management, Human Labor, Automated Machines, Comparative Analysis, Cost-Cutting Measures, Equipment Productivity, Human Productivity, Techniques, Health Considerations, Risk Analysis, Management Strategies, Cost-Effectiveness, Throughput, Cycle Time, Quality Consistency, Training Requirements, Downtime, Surface Finishes, Project Requirements, Ergonomic Factors, Hazardous Materials, Risk Mitigation, Construction Projects.*

1. Introduction
Stone polishing plays a crucial role in construction and architecture by enhancing the appearance and durability of stone surfaces like marble, granite, and limestone. Traditionally, skilled artisans have performed this task manually using techniques passed down through generations. However, technological advancements have introduced machine-assisted stone polishing, increasing efficiency and consistency. The comparison between human and machine stone polishing methods is significant due to its impact on cost, productivity, health, and risk management. This study aims to explore these aspects, providing valuable insights for industry stakeholders. The research will examine the cost dynamics of human versus machine stone polishing, including initial investment, operational expenses, and long-term maintenance. Productivity rates will also be evaluated, comparing the quality and quantity of output over specific timeframes. Health and safety are critical in industrial work, so the study will assess the occupational hazards of both methods. Factors like dust exposure, noise levels, ergonomic strain, and accident risks will be thoroughly analyzed to understand their health and safety implications [1-3]. This comparative study aims to provide

e ISSN: 2584-2854
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stakeholders with actionable insights to inform their decisions on stone polishing techniques. Whether it's manufacturers looking to optimize production, contractors seeking to improve project efficiency, or policymakers aiming to protect worker well-being, the findings will serve as a valuable resource for all involved.

2. Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the comparative analysis between human and machine stone polishing techniques.

Quantitative Methods: Utilized for statistical analysis, cost comparison, productivity assessment, and health risk evaluation. These methods involve collecting, calculating, and comparing numerical data.

Qualitative Methods: Used for surveys, interviews, and case studies. These methods gather insights, experiences, and detailed project analyses to provide context and depth to the quantitative data.

By combining the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research, this study aims to draw meaningful and well-rounded conclusions.

3. Literature Review

Recent research has extensively compared human and machine stone polishing techniques, focusing on efficiency, effectiveness, cost, productivity, health implications, and risk management. Smith et al. (2018) found machine polishing faster and more consistent, though human operators offer greater adaptability and detail. Patel and Gupta (2017) and Gupta et al. (2020) emphasized the need for further research, highlighting the gaps in understanding and optimization. Lee and Kim (2019) provided a comprehensive analysis across disciplines, suggesting practical recommendations for industry stakeholders. Johnson and White (2016) conducted a cost-benefit analysis, offering practical strategies to enhance efficiency, quality, and profitability while considering health and safety risks. Broader contexts, such as international marketing strategies (Albaum, Duerr, and Strandskov, 2005) and technological advancements in India (Chakrabarti and Bhaumik, 2009), further inform the discussion. Market trends identified by Gandhi (1999), along with technical insights from Gilat (2004), and geological studies by Dasgupta and Pal (2003), underscore the need for a holistic approach. Collectively, these studies advocate for balancing cost, productivity, health, and safety to optimize polishing techniques, with

4. Results & Discussion

4.1. Results

The comparative analysis of human versus machine stone polishing techniques revealed several key findings. In terms of cost, machine polishing was significantly more economical in the long run due to lower labor costs and higher efficiency, despite the substantial initial investment. Productivity-wise, machines outperformed human labor, offering consistent quality and speed, which led to increased output. Health assessments highlighted that machine polishing drastically reduced health risks associated with dust and prolonged physical exertion faced by human workers. Additionally, in terms of risk management, machines provided better control and predictability, minimizing workplace accidents and errors [4-7].

4.2. Discussion

The study demonstrates the advantages of machine stone polishing over traditional human techniques. The cost-effectiveness of machine polishing becomes apparent when considering long-term operation and maintenance. Although the upfront investment is higher, the reduced labour costs and increased productivity offset this initial expenditure. Machines consistently produce higher-quality finishes at a faster rate, enhancing overall productivity. Health and safety are critical areas where machine polishing shows marked benefits, as the reduction in exposure to harmful dust and alleviation of physical strain on workers contribute to a safer work environment, improving worker well-being and reducing healthcare costs and absenteeism. Furthermore, risk management is another area where machines excel, as the predictability and precision of automated systems reduce the likelihood of errors and accidents, fostering a more secure workplace [8-12]. However, the transition to machine polishing requires a significant initial investment and

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training for workers to manage and maintain the machinery effectively. Overall, the study underscores the superiority of machine stone polishing techniques in terms of cost, productivity, health, and risk management, suggesting a strategic shift for industries relying on traditional methods.

Conclusion

The comparative analysis indicates that machine stone polishing is more cost-effective and productive in the long term due to lower labour costs and consistent quality, despite the high initial investment. Health and safety benefits are notable, with reduced exposure to dust and physical strain on workers, leading to a safer work environment and lower healthcare costs. Machines also offer better risk management, minimizing workplace accidents. However, transitioning to machine polishing requires significant investment and training. A hybrid approach, combining machine efficiency with human craftsmanship, may optimize stone polishing processes, balancing cost-efficiency, productivity, worker health, and risk mitigation. Further research is essential to enhance the sustainability and effectiveness of both methods.

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