

Non-Compliance with Safety Controls at Work in the Indian Companies

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Abstract: *The objective of this research is to know the reasons for non-compliance with safety controls at work in the India companies. The method used is the cross-sectional study with a sample of 675 occupational health and safety managers from 120 companies in the country. The same number of surveys, three focus groups and nine interviews were carried out as revealed from the case study. Descriptive statistical calculations were performed for quantitative data; for qualitative discourse analysis, identification and structural classification of strategic dimensions and search for a common behavior pattern. The results of this study revealed that around 23.11% of the professionals consulted, during the last year, were almost always frustrated by not being able to implement the workplace safety controls that they knew required by the company where they work. Among others, the main reasons were: 31% lack of support from management and 27.1% lack of support from the rest of the coordinators. It was concluded in the study that the occupational health and safety management system requires a more strategic vision on the part of the companies and a more convincing action on the part of the professionals in the area (ARM, 2016).*

Keywords: Safety Controls, Non-Compliance, Occupational Health and Safety, Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code

1. Introduction

Effects of the safety issue on the workplace

Occupational safety controls are the decisions and actions taken by the company to protect the lives of its personnel from the job they perform. Talking about industrial safety equals business productivity and staff well-being and hence there is the importance of controls being implemented effectively. It is estimated that every year, occupational hazards cause the death of more than 2.3 million workers worldwide. In India, despite the toughening of sanctions, updating of regulations and the fact that 52.7% of companies carry out low-risk activities, there is a rate of Occupational Accidents of 7.73 for each 100 affiliates, 7 being in 2014 higher than in previous years. Various studies have shown that these indices are related to the poor implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System. This fact is ratified by the control bodies, according to which there is still a lack of implementation by the companies. For example, only 21.07% of companies carry out epidemiological surveillance programs and 55.5% have an understanding of risk factors (ARM, 2016).

In addition to the fact that there is a principle of corporate social responsibility to take care of the lives of workers, including the Occupational Health and Safety Management System in strategic planning, which ensures a sustainable competitive advantage and more efficient results in all processes. This requires the participation of all levels of the company and the decisive leadership of the Occupational Health and Safety Manager, who must be motivated and supported in the management (Baldock et.al., 2016).

Despite the fact that international literature refers to certain practices that favor the Occupational Health and Safety Management System, such as: having the decisive role of managers and their transformational leadership and that the system is competent for the role, but there is still the stakeholders pressure, state regulations and organizational culture that workers should have safe behaviors. There are

few studies that indicate the causes of the low implementation of the system, at least in the India scenario. It was found that the low implementation of security controls was due to lack of budget and commitment of the work teams. Hence the relevance and novelty of this research exists as it aims to answer the question as to what are the reasons for the breach of safety controls at work in the India companies. This study is part of a macro-project called: Labor competencies and labor risk management (Baldock et.al., 2016).

Response

This study took advantage of the benefits of both types of research (qualitative and quantitative). As there was no information on the possible reasons for non-compliance with the workplace safety controls in companies in the country, it was decided to carry out a first inquiry from a quantitative approach to identify trends. After descriptive statistical calculations and data analysis, the attempt was made to proceed to give depth to the understanding of the reasons for non-compliance. For this, qualitative research was used. The quantitative approach was also used so as to undertake a cross-sectional study, which was carried out with a sample selected at discretion under non-probabilistic intentional sampling, seeking representation of different types of companies in various regions of India, collecting data from 120 companies. The following inclusion criteria were met: OSH managers with studies and experience in the area, and current performance as OSH leaders (Cagno et.al., 2013).

The universe was considered as the total number of graduates in occupational health between 2002 and 2013 in India, which according to the Labor Observatory were 35,468 people. The sample consisted of six hundred and seventy-five (675) people who met the following characteristics: 38% were men (255n) and 62% were women (420n); of 120 companies in 32 departments of the country. The total sample had studies in occupational health. 34% (223n) were technologists, 28.4% (192n) professionals, 14.7% (99n) technicians and 16.37% (113n) specialists. The remaining 6.53% (48n) were master's or high school graduates with an emphasis on occupational health. They worked in different economic sectors: Services

22% (148n), Construction 20.5% (139n), Metalworking 16.2% (109n), Health 8% (54n), Agriculture 6% (41n) and other sectors 27.3% (184n) (Cagno et.al., 2013).

In the qualitative approach, the unit of analysis corresponded to nine occupational health professionals who had previously filled out the questionnaire; Focus groups and face-to-face interviews were conducted with them from a hermeneutical approach; the comprehension and understanding of the meanings of the speeches of the subjects was sought, understanding from dialogue and interpretive exercise. To ensure the rigor and credibility of the study, several of the items contained in the checklist for the critical evaluation of qualitative research were met, which, although it was adopted by biomedical journals, presents good practices that are worth copying. In particular, the recommendations for data analysis and processing were followed, in the sense of: making explicit the preconceived categories with which the data was encoded, obtaining feedback from the participants on the research results before the publication of the related case study article and use software for data storage, searching, coding and analysis (Gubnitsky & Cronje, 2017).

Critique of response

This study complied with the provisions and regulations related to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration. In the study this type of research is defined as "without risk" and it is also in accordance with the proposals which refer to clinical studies and present recommendations that, in the opinion of the author, are the investigations that comply with DGOSH regulations. The emphasis is on the development of a study with social value and scientific validity and also convenient and transparent with the participants involved in it. The instruments used are in the context of increasing the reliability and confidence of the findings. The interpretation of the methodological triangulation was used, consisting of using different instruments to confirm the results. The method used was the application of about 675 questionnaires with multiple-choice-self-sufficient close ended questions through a Google Form. There were three focus groups of 75 minutes and nine face-to-face interviews that lasted between 50 and 70 minutes, recorded and then faithfully transcribed. To guarantee the consistency and reliability of the study, the instruments were constructed from the theoretical understanding of the categories and submitted to the judgment of experts. It was also checked that the content of the questions accounted for the categories studied and that the language and writing style was understandable in the pilot test Gubnitsky & Cronje, 2017).

The instruments inquired about these two questions (KALE, 2012):

- 1) In your tenure as an OSH leader, during the last year, have you felt frustrated by not being able to implement the security controls that you know are required? and
- 2) What have been the reasons for not implementing the security controls that you know are required?

In the case of the questionnaire, response options were given - obtained from a theoretical reference - the participant could select several or one amongst the given options. In the analysis of data, the qualitative data was faithfully recorded and later transcribed. With the permission of the participants,

the interview sessions and focus groups were recorded. The responses were later processed with the Atlas Ti software. The technique of discourse analysis, identification and structural classification of strategic dimensions and search for a common behavior pattern were used. For the analysis of the questionnaires, descriptive statistical calculations were carried out. The information was processed with Microsoft Excel 2013. A data sheet was constructed where the responses of all the items were emptied, achieving analysis by response option and then jointly (KALE, 2012).

Overall Assessment of the situation

In the last year, 23.11% (156n) of the Occupational Health and Safety Managers consulted were almost always frustrated by not being able to implement the job security controls that they knew was required by the company where they work. The reasons are summarized in six reasons, among which stand out with a 31% the lack of support from the management and a 27.1% lack of support from the rest of the coordinators (Nathai-Balkissoon, 2016).

Professional frustration was understood as a feeling of sadness, disappointment, and disappointment caused by the inability to satisfy a need or desire. 4% (27n) of the total sample stated that during the last year they always felt frustrated and 19.11% (129n) almost always felt frustrated, with a permanent impossibility of performing the functions for which they were hired. 50.67% (342n) indicated that they have sometimes felt frustrated. 17% (115n) said almost never and 9.19% (62n) in the last year never felt frustrated.

Frustration levels are similar between men and women. The former registered 21% in almost always feeling frustrated, while women a close to 24%. When analyzing the data by regions of the country, it is found that some of the samples showed less frustration, while on contrary some regions showed the highest levels (45.8%). No significant differences were observed by academic level. Professionals and specialists presented 24.7% (89n) in almost always feeling frustrated and technicians and technologists 21.7% (78n) (Nathai-Balkissoon, 2016).

The research revealed that the reasons for non-compliance were found corresponding to the strategy and decision of the company. 58.1% refer specifically to the political commitment of some level of the company, to the level of senior management or process coordinators). The findings from the case study indicate the investigations were sought to find out the reasons for the non-compliance of workplace safety controls in the companies and found that 58.1% was due to a lack of support from senior management and process coordinators. These results confirm that the level of development in the management of occupational hazards is directly proportional to the internal conditions produced by the companies. Although there is legislation, control bodies and external advisers such as Occupational Risk Insurers, it is found that if the company does not commit itself, effective results will not be achieved (Nathai-Balkissoon, 2016).

The results are similar to other studies that reveal that it is still necessary to advance in the culture of occupational safety transcending the documentation of the processes to the commitment of senior management, as proposed by the OSH

model proposed by the Labor International Organization (ILO) and DGOSH. They concur with the idea that the commitment should be from all the relevant stakeholders or parties. A new profile for OSH Manager should be evolved that is not only technically competent in the identification and intervention risks but also identifies the location of the area of the highest risk for the company. This profile is required and should be that part of the company's strategic management. This profile is necessary as it is seen in accordance with the results that professionals have not been convincing and effective in making risk management. Moreover it is a task for all members of the company (Nathai-Balkissoon, 2016).

The results generate concern, because unlike other professions, feeling of frustration at not doing the right thing can really make the difference between the life and safety of others. In Occupational Health these levels of frustration translate into deterioration in the quality of working life and well-being of hundreds of employees in the country. This study generates important contributions. In the academic sense, it opens up new questions that should be recommended to be investigated. For example, the questions which should be investigated are (Podgórski, 2015):

- what is the vision of the entrepreneurs regarding the reasons for the non-implementation of the controls?
- How much does the lack of support from senior management and work teams demonstrate the low strategic competence of the G-SST consulted?
- Why so little support from senior management and process coordinators?
- Some regions have deviations and further investigation is necessary to know if the deviations are related to being the particular region of the country and can this be corroborated with more scientific studies in the area or nor.

On a practical level, it draws the attention of companies because complying with the OSH exceeds the hiring of a professional to lead the process: it is about accompanying them in the generation of a safety culture at all levels of the company. It opens the discussion about why the OSH Managers have not managed to secure position for themselves as a strategic actor within the organization and influence decision-making. Perhaps it is a pending issue for the managers who must think strategically about the performance and gain the trust and support of senior management (Podgórski, 2015).

From this research it is concluded that the safety system needs to be implemented with a more strategic vision by companies and a more convincing action by professionals in the area. The reasons given for not complying with the security controls spring from the organization itself and can be overcome if a synergistic work is carried out between all the interested groups. At a pragmatic level, a close relationship has been proposed between success in risk management and the level of commitment of senior management, since apparently the main improvement that would have to be made is the increase in this aspect (Podgórski, 2015).

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