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ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS CONTROL AND RISK MANAGEMENT IN GARMENT INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

This study was mainly conducted to examine the effect of human factor in accident causation. Information were collected from two main sources such as secondary data analysis and preliminary data collection through designed questionnaire, checklists and accident investigations and through informal discussions with workers and other staff.

The highest number of accidents were reported from the manufacturing sector and the majority of the reports came from the textile trade (32%) even though it was a non-hazardous industry. But In Sri Lanka, the garment industry, when compared with the other industries, many garment factories has implemented satisfactory Occupational Health and Safety activities. Besides, the management process is far better than that of the other industries, but the garment industry is fraught with a problem of turnover.

According to the findings, generally in the industrial environment, accidents do occur at the beginning and at the end of the shift. But in the garment industry, accidents occur during the day time especially before and after the meals, but however, no special patterns were observed. There are no frequent changes in the working environment and the working method in workplace is rather satisfactory. Most of the workers are satisfied with their environmental condition. Training is provided, and the management ability of the supervisors in accident prevention activity, and their job satisfaction is high 64 (79%). However they tend to believe that the company neglects safety rules when work load is high 54 (66.7%). Also they have good knowledge and skills to do their day to day work.

There is a significant association between the nature of work being performed relating to accidents. The caught in between object is the major cause and laceration cut and puncture confusion /bruising /crushing were the most common type of injuries. The commonest mode of suffering from these wounds were crushing injuries caused to the finger while operating the button press machine and the needle entering the phalanx at the time of stitching. Machine operators and maintenance workers were more prone to the accidents (75% and 14%).

It can be concluded that there is no relationship between childhood accidents, risk taking behavior age and gender and accident causation probability .Also there is no relationship

between experience and willingness to do risky work in garment industry. There is no relationship between risk taking behavior and accident probability.

100% of the interviewed workers confirmed that they had received first aid. In all cases there is a total absence of post-accident investigations, even though a post-accident investigation is a very useful tool to identify root causes.

By and large, the workers are provided with, and knew the use of their protective devices. Workers had deliberately neglected wearing protective devices. Many could have been prevented with the use of personal protective equipments or by utilizing the safety guards that are generally provided with the sewing machines. Training and retraining, implementing of proper SMS and the use of proper PPE, and fixing guards could prevent accidents.

Most of the workers believe that many accidents do happen due to poor concentration 30 (37%) and insufficient training 20 (24.7%).

Many accidents had happened due loss of situation awareness, loss of mindfulness due to loss of concentration and negative influences in the decision process and poor critical thinking at the time of accident. Mental training like meditation programs may be a useful tool for accident prevention. Scenario based learning, accident simulation, and training of critical thinking is so very important. Therefore a well designed structured training program should be given for the workers.

As accidents can be prevented by implementing proper administrative controls such as implementing proper SMS, proper selection and training to get the right labor force, proper work planning, Scenario based learning, accident simulation, and training of critical thinking and some engineering controls like Man machine interface design, Layout planning and fixing guards and safety devises, etc., management responsibility regarding health and safety is very vital

In order to manage Health and Safety in Organizations, participation of all the employees in the organization is necessary such as production, engineering, HR and Administration, purchasing, QC, etc. Therefore Health and safety is not a separate function. As the slogan "quality is every body's business" we can say Health and safety must be regarded as every body's business.