

Chapter 14

Strategic Development of Responsible Warehousing with Safety Partnership

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ABSTRACT

Occupational safety and health (OSH) issues have become a major concern to many corporations in Malaysia since the enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994. While safety management system has been researched, only limited literatures have given attention to warehousing. The development of effective partnerships between customers and vendors to identify opportunities for enhancing safety management system. Employee safety behaviour in the workplace is crucial in approaching towards safety compliance and safety performance indicators. The main objective was to test the safety behaviour of the workers. Data were collected throughout the warehousing processes of a multinational electronics manufacturer in Malaysia. A questionnaire has been filled-up by the warehousing employees. This study proposes the theory of planned behaviour were to explain the linkage between customer - vendor partnership and safety behaviour. Respondents were questioned partnership with its customers to systematically improve safety behaviour. Usually most of the occupational accident or disease took place in the material handling operations and activities with cargo interface. The findings of this study show that customer-vendor partnership has a significant and positive relationship on safety behaviour. This approach to be examined for improved safety ownership and the possibility that enhancements would become an essential part of the vendor's processes, systems, and culture. This customer-vendor partnership approach will develop safety improvements for next heights of success. SPSS was applied for processing the data. It was found that information dissemination and collaboration with the client are important. Employees should participate in the safety program as required by the clients so as to obtain the merits of high performance workforce.

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INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of a safety management system depends on to what extent employees understand and accept the safety management system. Only through a systematic safety management system that is accepted by all employees can an organisation effectively eliminate workplace injuries. Without knowing how well employees subscribe to the organisation's safety management system, the aim to eliminate or reduce occupational safety and health (OSH) related injuries will not successful. Occupational safety and health should be able to influence behavioural changes among employees and bring the effort of both employers and employees together to manage an organisation's safety management system. The employee safety behaviour also gives impacts to organisational safety performance. In this study which will be concentrated on customer-vendor relationship as main factor that will influence safety behaviour in the workplace.

According to the Labour Force Survey Report Malaysia (DOS, 2013), by 2012, they were 12.723 million employed persons. The number of employed persons data show that the manufacturing sector employs 2.228 million persons (17.5%), agriculture, forestry & fishing sector employs 1,602 million persons (12.6%), construction sector employs 1.164 million persons (9.1%), and Transport, Storage and Communications sector employs 0.624 million persons (4.9%) of the work force (Table 1).

According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), every year over two million people die around the world due to work-related accidents or diseases. In Malaysia, the major policy concerning OSH is Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) 1994. The percentage of accidents in manufacturing sector (2011: 29%) is high and the data shows manufacturing sector is among the most hazardous workplace. The percentages of accidents in Transportation and storage sector (2011: 6%) are higher than some other sectors (Table 2). The un-proportionately accident rate in the transportation & storage industry in contrast of the construction industry is probably due to the latter's better OS&H management as compared to the fragmented authorities in the transportation industry.

Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is an extension of Theory of reasoned action (TRA) that it offers room to address those behaviours with regard to being under volitional control of the individual (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). In a Malaysian study on safety practices at engineering laboratories and workshops (Koo, et al., 2014) shown that three explanatory variables in the TPB can explain behavioural intention of practising safety with 52% of variance and safety knowledge as an extension construct of the TPB model with behavioural intention can explain the safety behaviour with the variance of 40%. The paper used the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) as the theoretical basis to assess differential qualities of resources, capabilities and work processes. According to TPB, behavioural decision is made due to attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control which influences the behaviour primarily through their effects on behavioural intention. Behavioural study is of equal importance where it needs to include the human decision makers (suppliers, customers and service providers) of multiple firms (CSCMP, 2008). Therefore, inclusion of customer perspective can provide empirical evidence to explain the customers' perception, attitude and response patterns. The paper will study the factors that influence the effectiveness of safety behaviour and its correlation with the accident rate in storage / warehousing. Moreover, the study will also provide some suggestions and critiques on the above objective. The main objective of this study to identify the perceived norms of customer - vendor partnership towards safety behaviour.

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