Work Health Safety Assessment

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**Introduction**

Work and safety in workplace imply that the workers in the workplace are ensured safety and abstinence from harm. The workplace is an environment which can be conclusive of many hazards that affect the worker socially, economically and psychologically. Therefore the workplace ensures the health and safety assessments to determine, identify and resolve the potential risks in the health and safety of workers in the work-place. The thorough assessment of persistent or predicted risk factors. Hazards are continuously assessed to measure the level of risk involved. The recognition of risk leads to the adoption of appropriate measures to avert or reduce their impact. Therefore the effective management of risk improves workers health. The global health framework describes that certain trans-national economic behaviours can contain the incomes for certain groups and workers leading them to find opportunities in informal economy, leading to social stratification, differential exposure and health inequalities leading to a decline in essential health care,nutrition and in many cases exposure to risk to sustain economic well being (Diderichsen F, 2001). The most vulnerable groups who become targeted to the workplace hazards are those in the lower management of labour, who are directly exposed to the threat. Australia has recently incorporated within its national policy to make arrangements for effective risk assessment across the country. The regulations, acts and agencies have been formed as part of the initiative which defines workplace standards, responsibilities and penalties for not complying with them (WHS/OH&S acts, regulations and codes of practice, 2018). The Australian government regulates workplace safety through agencies like Safe Work Australia, who is primarily responsible for minimising the risk eminent in the workplace (About us, 2019).

**Thesis Statement**

The paper incorporates the importance of work health safety and how the risk assessment can minimize the effects of risks exposed to the employes in the workplace. The paper focuses on hazard identification, the vulnerable groups at risk, and involved and strategies to minimize the associated risks by employing relevant strategies.

**Discussion**

**Key agencies institutions and influences in structures**

The goals of the work health safety organisations lead to a better comprehension of the ideals of occupational health safety. The Safe Work Australia initiative is a statutory agency with the primary objective of improving health and safety conditions for workers in their working spheres (Safe Work Australia Act 2008, 2019). The agency through its codes of implementation ensures a reduction in the government, industry and unions towards injury, disease and death of workers in the workplace.

**Globalisation and Work health safety.**

The World Health Organization and International Labour Organization illuminate health and safety workers in the developed developing states. The relations between e employers and the workers change with little and no regard for working conditions in the developing states. The multinationals all around the world are accused of inequalities in working conditions through the liberalization and globalization projects (Mitchel, 1999). The women, children, poor and men especially working in the mines are exposed to higher risks and are vulnerable when it comes to disease, injury and death. These groups are vulnerable due to lack of policies and their implementation, the spell of poverty which forces them to earn., and income inequalities which lead to a diminishing intake of nutrition and health care facilities.

**SDG and Work Health Safety**

The sustainable developments goals address the vulnerable groups and the work environment challenges they face due to them. They incorporate and recognize the need for unpaid and equal wages and policies to promote shared responsibility through gender equality (HOW TO MANAGE WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS). The SDG goal for decent work and economic growth similarly protects labour rights and secure working environment, including the migrant worker and those in risk-prone employment (Relevant SDG Targets related to Working Conditions, 2019). This also renders the effective management in the workplace environments to reduce ongoing occupational illnesses, diseases and deaths. The management can cohesively work to induce healthy lifestyles by ensuring work health standards and eliminating risks through risk management (Improve Occupational Health, 2019).

**Ethics in the work health safety**

Ethics play an important role in the reduction and limiting the risk associated with a healthy workplace for the employees. The management shall mitigate and respond to the conflicts and vacuums which to the risk escalation in a workplace (Koh D, 1995). The moral obligation of knowing the risk and yet exposing the workforce to the risks, and not administrating the risks identified by the workforce for them is more of an ethical before it becomes a management issue. The management is responsible for creating awareness and training amongst individuals who might be at risk in their working spheres and taking measures before any issue arises. Management is enti8rely responsible for implementing guidelines given under government policies to overcome and reduce risks at the workplace (L Rosenstock, 1987).

**Case Study**

The office manager of a law firm conducted a risk assessment at their office, which is also neighboured by a construction site of a building under construction. A staff of 50 lawyers and associates work at the office with two associates on the wheelchair. The welfare facilities of the office are available to the employees such as kitchen and restroom facilities on all three floors. The office space is cleaned regularly with the cleaning chemical stored in the sanitation storage rooms. The office timing is from 9 am to 5 pm. A risk assessment survey was carried out in the office by the quality assurance manager. He found that apart from existing risk factors, Asbestos was also found in the building. The residue must have remained since the construction of the building, and insulation fittings in the office.

**Work Health Risk Assessment Sheet.**

**The risk Matrix**

**1-5 from least to most likely to happen.**

**1-4 defines the severity at maximum on 4.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Task/Scenario | Hazards | Associated Harm | Existing Risk Controls | Current risk Rating | Additional controls are required | Residual Risk rating |
| Contact with bare wires and plugs. | **Electrical** | * Faulty wires and fittings; electrical shocks * Burns * Lead to fires. | * Reporting defective plugs and wires. * Replacing equipment * Staff asked no to bring appliance along on work. | 2 | * Regular safety checks shall be maintained in the office. | 1 |
| Work station environment | **Computers** | Upper limb and eyesight disorders. | * Breaks scheduled * Lightning and temperature * Posture maintain sitting equipment | 8 | * Supervisors to ensure breaks * Avoiding pressure on sight by fixing   blinds and  sunlight  exposure during  work. | 2 |
| Office setup and interior. | **Slips and trips** | The staff may slip or trip and fall from objects. | * Precaution boards for wet floor * Railings and fixed cables. * Cleaning office past off-timings. | 2 | * Trained housing managing fewer issues like wet floor cleaning. * The floor shall be carpeted instead of slippery tiles. | 1 |
| Inhaled | **Asbestos** | * Harm lungs of employees. | * Precaution signs for the asbestos. * Partitioning the between   the existent residue of partition. | 9 | * The asbestos may not be disturbed and dealt with   proper immunization. | 3 |
| Alienation and work responsibilities | **Stress** | * Work deadlines * Behaviour and attitudes of co-workers. | * Training in staff to inculcate time management. * No discrimination policy | 6 | * Psychologists can be recruited for the staff and manage their work. * Communication and unconscious bias can be reduced. | 8 |
| Smoking and  Burning of appliances. | **Fire** | Suffer from smoke inhalation  Burns from fire. | * Fire exits in the building * Fire extinguishers | 3 | * The passage for disabled /on wheelchairs shall be constructed alongside the fire exit channels. | 1 |

**Findings**

The case study reflects upon the risks that are persistent in the work environment of the Law firm and that can potentially affect the workers in the working environment. The risks portrayed in the work environment suggest that risk is high for computers, fire, stress, electricity and Asbestos. It is assessed that after risk controls for the electrical risks the residual risk has reduced to 1, as the wire and electrical shocks can be easily averted through these measures.

The installation of furniture posed a high risk of eyesight and upper limb body posture, however, the risk has been reduced to two as the supervisors regulate and ensure break timings and the furniture has been installed for reducing the risk to 2. Moreover, the risk involved with Asbestos was high to 9 as they involve life-threatening risks for the employs but the separation of the area from the workplace has contained the risk assessment. Similarly the stress in employs is considered one of the leading causes of lower productivity and exposure of employs to higher psychological risk, however, the risk is further reduced if a psychologist is employed to reduce the stress levels amongst those facing disparities in the workplace.

The slips and trips are a common occurrence and the risk can be easily reduced by taking vigilant preventive measures. Show Although the firm has undertaken measure to avert the risks, however, there are still strategies that can be taken to further reflect upon the issues and eliminate the threats posed to employees by working in the Law firm. In this regard women, those of colour and the disabled shall be managed according to their needs, for instance, those who operate on wheelchairs shall have their own fire exit and those of who get stressed should be managed according to their respective needs as mentioned in the Work Health Risk Assessment Sheet.

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