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Health and Safety: An analysis of health and safety rules/regulations at workplaces in the city of Dublin

SEVERINO GOMES DINIZ NETO

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ABSTRACT

Health and safety in the workplace is the topic discussed in this research project. It examines and comprehends the laws and policies governing health and safety in Ireland, as well as the steps that businesses are doing to uphold or enforce these laws. One of the most crucial topics when considering corporate social responsibility is health and safety. When employers and employees disregard the law or fail to protect themselves, there is no safety culture within the organization, which can be costly to the business. Interviews were conducted with individuals who are employed in places where health and safety considerations are important. This research project examines the level of involvement between the business and its employees to see whether there is any communication breakdown that might result in a workplace accident.

Acronyms used;

(OHS) Occupational Health and Safety

(HSA) Health and Safety Authority

(HSE) Health Service Executive

(SMEs) - Small-to-medium-sized firms

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1. INTRODUCTION

The top level of an employee's general physical, psychological, and human wellbeing is referred to as their occupational safety (Jaiswal, 2022). It is the area of medicine that deals with all occupational health and safety issues (Jaiswal, 2022). In essence, workplace wellness is seen as preventative care. The term "occupational health" relates to problems with welfare, safety, and health at work. "The overall goal of the laws, regulations, and initiatives pertaining to occupational safety and health (OHS) is to improve working conditions for employees, colleagues, families, clients, as well as other stakeholders" (Jaiswal, 2022). Improved business practices, a stronger brand image, strong enthusiasm, and personnel a sense of security are all ensured by the improved occupational health and safety requirements (Jonathan, 2016). Management should give top emphasis to employee health and safety programs because they save lives, boost output, and lower expenses (Jonathan, 2016). The emphasis of these health and safety initiatives should be on employee participation, ongoing supervision, and a comprehensive wellness component (Jonathan, 2016). Workplace safety demands that there shouldn't be a major risk that employees will become unable to execute their jobs (Garcia-Herrero et al., 2012). Consequently, the goal of health and safety at work is to establish the surroundings, skills, and behaviours that will allow the employee and his or her organization to complete their task effectively and in a way that prevent situations that could endanger them (Garcia-Herrero et al., 2012).

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Safety, Health, and Welfare at Work Act of 2005 outlines the fundamental criteria for ensuring and enhancing workers' wellbeing, safety, and overall welfare. The law applies to all businesses, irrespective of the number of employees (Irish Health and Safety Authority, 2015). The 2005 Act sets guidelines for ensuring and strengthening all employees' security, safety, and wellbeing. Employer provides and ensuring a healthy and safe work environment, which includes danger identification and risk evaluation (Keane, 2015). Activities and tasks must be handled and carried out in order to protect the safety, health, and welfare of employees to the greatest extent possible (Irish Health and Safety Authority, 2015). There is a noticeable gender disparity in terms of how severely occupational health and welfare is regarded, indicating a need to best address women's issues (Keane, 2015). One sector that defies this trend of stability is health and safety, which improves among full-time employees, those with higher socioeconomic grades, and those in the Rest of Leinster region (Irish health and safety authority). Further pressing challenges comprise modifications to employment agreements made without the employees' knowledge (Gorry, 2015); and pay or hourly cuts made without the workers' approval. Labour lawmakers and businesses in Ireland should collaborate to develop a dynamic, adaptive, and sensitive regulatory structure capable of dealing successfully with present and future health and safety concerns (De castro, 2020). Furthermore, effective health and safety management aids in identifying the requirements of disadvantaged groups (De castro, 2020). This is to guarantee that their requirements are identified and addressed in the workforce. Ireland's job sector is booming more varied (De castro, 2020). This may be attributed to a growth of migrant employees, or disability, gender, or age-related concerns, and businesses must analyse and manage the specific risks involved with disadvantaged individuals or groups of personnel

(Gorry, 2015). As a result, it is critical that law prioritizes disadvantaged groups. Finally, employers must educate their workers to all laws with the goal of promoting wellness, safety, and overall welfare through increasing awareness (Fan, et al, 2020). Furthermore, firms must provide them with effective training and development in order to support the demands of this critical feature (Fan, et al, 2020). Ireland's laws are perplexing and complicated; it appears that there are several rules and regulations (Gorry, 2015). As a result, it is nearly hard for companies to observe all of these regulations, making it simple for a company to expose itself up to a significant and expensive lawsuit from employees and making it simpler for a worker to be taken advantage of and have his rights neglected or violated. The main issue for businesses is that it is quite expensive for them; thus, Ireland must encourage businesses and encourage them to comply with regulations (Fan, et al, 2020).

Many factors influence safety, including human behaviour, structure, and the interplay of people and technology when addressing how to reduce work-related accidents and risks (Akselsson, 2015). The hazards are known and respected by employees at all levels of the company. An enlightened culture is one that values knowledge, transparency, justice, and flexibility (Akselsson, 2015). Pecillo (2015) investigated the effect of a safety and health management system and discovered that implementing such a system has no enough influence on improving safety and health in an organization. Eklöf et al. (2017) demonstrated that boosting employee safety engagement through safety behaviour group meetings resulted in favourable effects and boosted workers' safety behaviour, lending credence to what is known as organizational safety climatologically concept. Workplace safety & health specialists frequently assist organizations in their efforts to build a safety culture. Nord-Nilsson and Vånje (2018) discovered that changing to a trainer job can help to develop a safety culture in a study of occupational safety and health

professionals. In a study conducted by Luria and Morag (2011), the SMBWA were carried out by both managers and employees, resulting in involvement and the collection of information regarding safety behaviour and safety circumstances which would not have been collected otherwise. Well-functioning management system increases scientific approach of learning. Businesses are obligated to address safety and health issues in a comprehensive way in order to avoid injuries and enhance the work environment (SWEA, 2017). A management system, according to SWEA, is a comprehensive procedure for setting goals, doing activities, and then updating on the results, assessing them, learn from them, and improving the processes. According to Akselsson (2015), a safety management system includes structures, plans, roles, routines, processes, and more to assist the company in identifying and dealing with hazards effectively. Rollenhagen (2009) discusses the emphasis on safety culture, writing that it can lead to an overemphasis on behaviours, mindsets, and beliefs, with the risk of overlooking the development of safer technology innovations. The emphasis on safety culture may result in the company dealing with present flaws instead of attempting to change them, and Rollenhagen believes that safety culture should not be used as a justification for poor technology development. On either side, he extends the debate with safety culture as a potential for improving incentive to innovate and build secure technology ideas, and the safety culture notion offers benefits when applied appropriately. He advises, for instance, using the notion of safety cultures in terms of systematic safety.

Cooney's (2016), if there are possibilities for safety training in the organizational culture, safety is improved. Training in safety practices is part of a master plan to tackle the negative organizational health impacts (Cooney 2016). Undertaking in-depth research on training procedures and associated interactions with other parts of a facility's risk control measure,

concentrating such effort on organizations with outstanding safety and health reputations may provide program templates for excellent training that can best complement or strengthen other operational measures targeted at enhancing risk mitigation. Sileyew (2016), Comparing discrepancies in the quality of training of employees wounded or affected by workplace risks to those who are not. The goal here is to have a better understanding of how training gaps might contribute to occupational safety hazards. Thus an assessment would necessitate procedures to filter out several non-training elements that could be causing visible variations in health and safety issues (Sileyew 2016). Hu (2021), suggested that companies should convene workshops to review the ongoing and prospective relevance of occupational safety awareness. Specialists knowledgeable about safety training, competency training, health programs, organizational behaviour, and assessment would be invited (Hou, 2021). These workshops will indeed attempt to combine insights focuses on the issues raised during training as well as additional considerations like the ampleness of regulatory frameworks in safety training regulations, future training obstacles respond to unpredictable workplace innovations, worker demographic trends, assessment results for evaluating training effectiveness, the validity of combining multiple workplace training domains (safety training, job skills training, worksite health promotion), and other challenges. According to Marconi et al. (2016), concentrating attention on the most common forms of workplace injuries and illnesses and choosing sectors or work activities wherein they occur most frequently will be optimal for implementing effective workplace safety trainings. Disparities with how statutory training standards were satisfied at the various selected companies, as well as linkages connecting training and certain injury and illness adverse outcomes, should be investigated (Marconi et al., 2016). The amount to which the adaptive practices matched safety training criteria, as well as the subsequent experiences, could be useful

in determining their utility (Marconi et al., 2016).

Occupational accidents and hazards have been the causative factor of 2.3 million premature deaths worldwide in 2014. (Martins, 2015). Around 350,000 of these were caused by human errors, while the remainder were caused by occupational disorders. Studies found that reasonable measures could have reduced these figures significantly, and that the related financial effect is equal to 4% of world GDP (Martins, 2015). An unprecedented rise in workplace accidents since 2014 indicates that occupational health and safety management is being mismanaged or has become ineffective in the workforce (Martins, 2015). The annual variation in the number of labour fatalities is not uncommon. While data are limited, the tendency looks to be similar, if not severe, among European small-to-medium-sized firms (SMEs), which represent most of the world's financial foundation (Mendeloff, 2016). The environment seems to be far riskier in small businesses than in big enterprises, based on the incidence of injuries and deaths (Mendeloff, 2016). SMEs account for 82 percent of all work-related accidents or injuries in Europe, and 90 percent of those that result in death (Holizki, 2015). Multiple studies have adequately demonstrated the economic and social consequences of work-related accidents and illnesses in the SME sector. Aside from the obvious pain and despair, production declines and job satisfaction deteriorate. Putting these considerations into account, the yearly financial disaster from industrial accidents in Europe is projected to be 10 billion euro (Holizki, 2015). Risk management, according to Sghaier et al. (2015), is a critical element of business performance in economic terms, socioeconomic variables, and ecological sustainability. Managing risk, as a decision-making tool, is a part of securing the long-term viability of any company, and this is becoming increasingly clear as the overall performance advances, as stated indeed a generation earlier. Mitigation of work health & safety concerns, in instance, may be considered as a prudent

tactical endeavour in times of rapid socioeconomic transformation. Indeed, Businesses must enhance their identification and management of the numerous types of risk that exist in their workplaces (Sghaier et al, 2015).Baldock et al (2016), Years ago, it was noted that shortcomings in occupational health and safety in organizations are significantly connected with insufficient administration of the occupational hazards that these organizations face. It has recently been re-stated that businesses' poor capacity to analyse occupational health and safety concerns must be remedied as soon as possible (Baldock et al, 2016). Numerous scholars have noticed that SMEs have persistently low risk management expertise. They identify numerous variables that indirectly impact risk management in SMEs, such as an absence of financial, technological, and human resources, the burdensome nature of occupational health and safety regulations, the absence of such legislation, hierarchy, inadequate skills or the inexperience, poor communication or the failure to communicate among managers and workers.

There is a scarcity of empirical findings on financial penalties enforced on businesses for violating safety and health standards. However, it needs a full grasp of studies in this field of investigation because the weight of health and safety on enterprises can be substantial if not effectively managed. Certainly, the damage resulting from the breach of a safety and health responsibility should and must be severely penalized (Arewa and Farell, 2012). Worry of punishment and the potential repercussions of violation with health and safety laws is the primary cause for low risks (Arewa et al, 2018).Löfstedt, L. (2011), On the other hand, it is necessary to investigate if current excessive sanctions levied on corporations for violating health and safety standards genuinely dissuade corporations from acting negligently. This is critical since in the past, firms that have been penalised for violating safety requirements were frequently involved in unfavourable safety occurrences (Löfstedt, 2011). According to Fidderman (2014),

investigations on the consistency, tendency, and in-depth evaluation of workplace sanctions for safety and health are uncommon. As a result, the purpose of this research is to examine the sanctions imposed on these businesses in Ireland for violating safety and health rules."Judicial systems are progressively keen to issue a heavy penalty on safety violators in which there is minor damage... thus the need to grasp fairness of safety and health sanctions," (Fidderman, 2014). Per a rundown of health and safety financial penalties acquired from the HSE (2011) general populace register of verdicts, the construction sector solely recorded for 27 percent of health and safety infringements, compared to four important segments such as resource extraction production 2%, agribusiness 3%, services 33%, and industrial production 35%. (Arewa et al, 2018). Extreme health & safety fines, it is argued, have significant consequences for companies that may lack the economic "shock absorbers" to buffer the effect of catastrophic safety sanctions; consequently, small enterprises must gird themselves for positive safety and health environment (Warburton, 2016). In Ireland, for instance, three tenth organizations fail as a result of health and safety sanctions (OECD, 2021). However, the point is that almost every occurrence is avoidable; so, injury risk caused by safety and health breaches must be heavily fined. Nevertheless, the structure of some safety issues demonstrates that accidents can and do occur regardless of care.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Because pragmatism emphasizes the significance of utilizing the greatest instruments feasible to explore phenomena, pragmatism research philosophy will be applied. The basic goal of pragmatism is to conduct a study from a logical viewpoint, where information is automatically contested and appraised rather than being defined. As a result, pragmatism includes a component

of researcher engagement and discretion, particularly when forming findings based on respondent replies and preferences. In another sense, pragmatism is not bound (or constrained) by a single philosophy. In this study, a deductive strategy will be employed since it allows for the usage of qualitative research methods, albeit assumptions created by prior studies would indeed be articulated otherwise than by hypothesis testing. The deductive approach employs a survey to generate knowledge of observation, allowing the researcher to evaluate different understandings of participants using empirical data. The collected data is used to support or refute the numerous study questions, and the cycle can be replicated. The survey research technique will be employed since it is one of the best and most cost-effective research strategies. This approach to data collection yields rich and dependable data. Surveys are commonly employed in quantitative research programs and include a sample that is representative. It enables the collection of massive amounts of data which will be utilized to address the research questions. The mixed approach will be utilized to collect data since it allows the researcher to integrate quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a study to provide a precise set of data. The mixed method integrates methods to produce a single dataset, whereas the multi-method divides the research across parts, each of which produces a distinct data set.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study's results are discussed and presented in this section. In the 11 sectors under evaluation, the section concentrates on occupational health and safety, safety risk management techniques, organizational cultures related to safety, and safety training activities and communications. A quantitative analysis of the primary data gathered by a questionnaire survey produced the results. The findings in the paper are presented in tabular form. They were created by a thorough

analysis of the replies provided by respondents utilizing sophisticated features of the Microsoft Excel software.

4.1 FINDINGS

4.1.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1

Age of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
18-24	6	5%
25-34	66	53%
35-44	44	35%
45-54	8	6%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Table one above shows the age range of respondents. From the results, a total of 110 respondents (representing 88% of the total respondents) are between the ages of 25 and 44, while a small portion of 5% and 6% are between the ages of 18-24 and 45-54. This indicates that the samples used consist of more young people.

Table 2

Work Industry of Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Accounting/Business	24	19%
Cleaning	4	3%

Construction	2	2%
Customer support	2	2%
Health Services	28	23%
Legal	6	5%
Recruiting/HR	2	2%
Retail	14	11%
Security	18	15%
Tourism & Hospitality	22	18%
Warehouse	2	2%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Table 2 above shows the industries in which respondents work. Healthcare service workers have the most respondents, with 23% of the total respondents. Employees in accounting/business, tourism/hospitality, security, and retail respectively represent 19%,18%, 15%, and 11% of the total respondents in the study.

4.1.2 THEME ONE: SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Table 3

Health and safety rules/regulations at the workplace	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	102	82%
No	22	18%
Grand Total	124	100%

Employees follow health and safety rules/regulations	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	50	40%
Disagree	8	6%
Neutral	22	18%
Strongly Agree	40	32%
Strongly Disagree	4	3%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Table 3 above shows the responses of respondents when asked whether there are health and safety rules and/or regulations at their workplace. 102 respondents (representing 82%) agree that safety rules/regulations exist at their places of work, while 22 respondents (18%) believe otherwise. Furthermore, when respondents were asked if they follow workplace health and safety rules/regulations, 90 respondents (72%) either agreed or strongly agreed that workplace safety rules are being followed at their workplace. 18% of respondents were neutral and only 9% disagreed that safety rules/regulations are being abided by.

4.1.3 THEME TWO: WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE

Table 4

Organization promotes safety culture at the workplace	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	50	40%
Disagree	4	3%

Neutral	10	8%
Strongly Agree	56	45%
Strongly Disagree	4	3%
Grand Total	124	100%
Safety culture part of organization's long term strategic plan.	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	62	50%
Disagree	2	2%
Neutral	14	11%
Strongly Agree	44	35%
Strongly Disagree	2	2%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Table 4 represents the responses of respondents when they were asked whether their employer promotes and communicates safety culture at the workplace and whether they believe safety is part of their organization's strategic plans and goals. 106 respondents (85%) either agree or strongly agree that safety culture is strongly promoted and communicated at their workplace. However, only 8 respondents (6%) disagreed, while 10 respondents (8%) were neutral on the question. Consequentially, the same 106 respondents (85%) agree or strongly agree that safety culture is part of their organization's strategic plans or goals. While, 14 (11%) respondents were neutral, and only 4 respondents (3%) either disagree or strongly disagree that safety is part of their organization's long-term goals.

4.1.4 THEME THREE: TRAINING, PRACTICES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Table 4

Employees are well trained in a high occupational risk and hazards	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	54	44%
Disagree	12	10%
Neutral	20	16%
Strongly Agree	36	29%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%
Grand Total	124	100%
Employees have all protective gears for necessary protections	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	54	44%
Disagree	6	5%
Neutral	12	10%
Strongly Agree	50	40%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Table 4 above displays the results of respondents when asked whether employees are well trained (on and off the job) to work in high occupational risk and hazards and whether employees are equipped with the necessary materials, tools, equipment, and protective gear for required

protection. From the results, 90 respondents (73%) either agree or strongly agree that employees working at high occupational risk places or roles. However, 20 respondents (consisting of 16%) were neutral as to whether are well-trained to work in a high-risk occupational environment, and only a minor 14 respondents (12%) either disagree or strongly disagree with the statement that employees are well-trained to work in high-risk occupational environments.

Furthermore, 104 respondents (approximately 84%) either agree or strongly agree that employees are equipped with the necessary materials, tools, equipment, and protective gear for required protection to work in high-risk environments. However, 12 respondents (10%) were neutral on the question, but a minor 6% (8 respondents) either disagree or strongly disagree that employees are equipped with the necessary materials, tools, equipment, and protective gear for required protections in high-risk work environments.

4.1.5 THEME FOUR: PROFESSIONAL VIEWS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK

MANAGEMENT

Table 5

Organization’s overall risk management practices are effective.	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	62	50%
Disagree	6	5%
Neutral	16	13%
Strongly Agree	38	31%
Strongly Disagree	2	1%
Grand Total	124	100%

Organization's overall risk management strategy is well communicated	Frequency	Percentage
Agree	72	58%
Disagree	6	5%
Neutral	22	18%
Strongly Agree	0	0%
Strongly Disagree	24	19%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Table 5 shows the responses from respondents when asked whether they believe their organization's overall risk management practices are effective and whether their organization's overall risk management strategy is well communicated to employees and other stakeholders. The findings conclude that 100 respondents (representing 81% of the total sample) either agree or strongly agree that their organization's overall risk management practices are effective. Also, 16 respondents (13%), were neutral as to whether their organization's overall risk management practices are effective. However, only a small percentage of the total respondents (6%) either disagree or strongly disagree that their organization's overall risk management practices are effective.

On a similar note, in table 5 above, when asked whether their organization's overall risk management strategy is well communicated to employees and other stakeholders, 72 respondents (58%) agreed that their organization's overall risk management strategy is well communicated to employees and other stakeholders. Nonetheless, 22 respondents (18%) were neutral or unsure as to whether their organization's overall risk management strategy is well communicated to

employees and key stakeholders. However, close to one quarter (24%) of the total respondents either disagree or strongly disagree that their organization’s overall risk management strategy is well communicated to employees and other stakeholders.

4.1.6 THEME FIVE: THE BREACH OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES/REGULATIONS AND ITS CONSEQUENCIES

Table 6

Organization recently experienced any accidents due to breach in health and safety rules	Frequency	Percentage
No	106	85%
Yes	18	15%
Grand Total	124	100%
financial impact suffered by your organization due to the breach of health and safety regulations	Frequency	Percentage
No	106	85%
Yes	18	15%
Grand Total	124	100%

Source: Field Study, 2022

Results from the last theme’s research questions regarding breaches of occupational health and safety rules at the workplace are shown in table 6 above. 106 respondents (85% of respondents) said their organization had not recently experienced any accidents or hazards due to breach in health and safety rules and regulations. On the other hand, a tiny portion of the total respondents

(15%) said their organization had recently experienced any accidents or hazards due to breaches in health and safety rules and regulations. Consequentially, 106 respondents (representing 85% of the total) said that there were some financial impacts suffered by their organizations due to the breach of health and safety regulations that occurred. However, 18 respondents (15%), said no financial impacts were suffered by their organizations due to the breach of health and safety regulations, as either the penalty was minimal or nonexistent.

4.2 DISCUSSION

4.2.1 THEME ONE: SAFETY RULES AND REGULATIONS

Firstly, the existence of workplace safety rules and regulations in Ireland is clear from the research findings. This means almost every company operating in multiple industries in Ireland has workplace health and safety rules/regulations in place. But whether these workplace safety rules/regulations are being adhered to by employees is debatable (even though 72% of respondents asserted that they follow workplace health and safety rules/regulations at the workplace). This aligns with the conclusion of Keane (2015) that says, “Employer provides and ensures a healthy and safe work environment, which includes danger identification and risk evaluation”. It also conforms with the requirements of the Irish Health and Safety Authority (2015), which insists that “Activities and tasks must be handled and carried out in order to protect the safety, health, and welfare of employees to the greatest extent possible”.

4.2.2 THEME TWO: WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY CULTURE

Additionally, the practice of an effective and efficient workplace health and safety culture in

Ireland is promising, as the findings as shown. This goes to show that many employers care about the well-being of their employees. For example, during the era of Covid-19 pandemic, most employees across all industries (excluding healthcare service workers) were compelled to work from home by their employers, in other to avoid contracting the various. However, whether workplace health and safety cultures are part or significant elements of most organizations' strategic/long-term plans is questionable. This can be linked to De Castro (2020) conclusions that “Labor lawmakers and businesses in Ireland should collaborate to develop a dynamic, adaptive, and sensitive regulatory structure capable of dealing successfully with present and future health and safety concerns”. “With further pressing challenges comprise modifications to employment agreements made without the employees' knowledge; and pay or hourly cuts made without the workers' approval”(Gorry, 2015).

4.2.3 THEME THREE: TRAINING, PRACTICES, AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Further findings show that majority of employees are well-trained (both on and off the job) with regard to workplace health and safety. Additional analysis also shows that employees are equipped with the necessary materials, tools, equipment, and protective gear for required protection to work in high-risk environments. Providing training as well as safety tools/equipment need to maintain safety at the workplace is a significant requirement of the Irish health and safety regulations. This goes to show that majority of businesses operating in Ireland adhere to Irish workplace health and safety regulations. After all, Cooney (2016), concluded that “training in safety practices is part of a master plan to tackle the negative organizational health impacts, and undertaking in-depth research on training procedures and associated interactions with other parts of a facility's risk control measure”.

4.2.4 THEME FOUR: PROFESSIONAL VIEWS OF HEALTH AND SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT

Additionally, the findings under this theme illustrate that the overall workplace health and safety risk management strategies are effective. More discoveries on this show a fair amount of neutrality, as some employees are not certain as to whether their organizations' overall risk management strategies are being communicated. However, a large portion of the industry believes the overall risk management strategy of businesses is communicated and understood by employees. This finding aligns with that of Hu (2021), who suggested that “companies should convene workshops to review the ongoing and prospective relevance of occupational safety awareness”. Specialists knowledgeable about safety training, competency training, health programs, organizational behaviour, and assessment would be invited (Hu, 2021).

4.2.5 THEME FIVE: THE BREACH OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY RULES/REGULATIONS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

Lastly, the study discovered that majority of the businesses in Ireland have not experienced any recent organizational accidents that were caused by noncompliance with the existing workplace health and safety rules/regulations. Although, there are some breaches in workplace safety rules/regulations, these breaches were met with severe financial implications in form of damages, penalties, or fines paid by the negligent organizations. These breaches could be due to what Baldock et al (2016) pointed out when they concluded that, “Years ago, it was noted that shortcomings in occupational health and safety in organizations are significantly connected with insufficient administration of the occupational hazards that these organizations face”. And it has

recently been re-stated that businesses' poor capacity to analyse occupational health and safety concerns must be remedied as soon as possible (Baldock et al, 2016).

5. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSION

A survey form was used in this research, "Health and safety at the workplace: An assessment of businesses in Ireland," to collect relevant data from organizational employees and managers about workplace health and safety rules and regulations, workplace safety culture, workplace safety training and responsibilities, professional opinions on organizations' overall risk management, and violations of workplace health and safety rules and/or regulations. Advanced Excel analysis methods were used to analyse the data, and descriptive statistical reporting was used to display the findings.

The following is a summary of the major research conclusions about each proposed study:

1. The existence of workplace safety rules and regulations in Ireland is clear from the research findings. This means almost every company operating in multiple industries in Ireland has workplace health and safety rules/regulations in place. But whether these workplace safety rules/regulations are being adhered to by employees is debatable.
2. The practicing of an effective and efficient workplace health and safety culture in Ireland is promising, and aligns with the findings of Eklöf et al. (2017), "practicing workplace safety culture involves boosting employee safety engagement through safety behaviour group meetings resulted in favourable effects and boosted workers' safety behaviours, lending credence to what is known as organizational safety climatological concept". This goes to show that many employers care about the well-being of their employees.

3. The majority of employees are well-trained (both on and off the job) with regard to workplace health and safety. Additional analysis also shows that employees are equipped with the necessary materials, tools, equipment, and protective gear for required protection to work in high-risk environments. Providing training as well as safety tools/equipment need to maintain safety at the workplace is a significant requirement of the Irish health and safety regulations.
4. The study discovered that the overall workplace health and safety risk management strategies of most businesses in Ireland are effective. More discovery on this shows a fair amount of neutrality, as some employees are not certain as to whether their organizations' overall risk management strategies are being communicated. However, a large portion of the industry believes the overall risk management strategy of businesses is communicated and understood by employees.
5. Lastly, the study discovered that majority of the businesses in Ireland have not experienced any recent organizational accidents that were caused by noncompliance with the existing workplace health and safety rules/regulations. Although there are some breaches in workplace safety rules/regulations, these breaches were met with severe financial implications in form of damages, penalties, or fines paid by the negligent organizations.

5.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The researcher's ability to complete a significant amount of the study was constrained by insufficient financing. The researchers also picked sample sizes from Dublin because it was close to them and because trying to work with samples from other areas was challenging because they didn't have a good understanding of the companies in those other regions.

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7. APPENDICES

Appendix 1; Copy of Informed consent form

Informed Consent Form / Plain Language Statement for Business Research Project for BABS BAM /BAAF students in year 3 Independent College Dublin.

Research Study Title: Health and Safety: An analysis of health and safety rules/regulations at workplaces in the city of Dublin.

Purpose of Research : To find out where the main problem is, if the company are not taking the measures or not giving all information and training for its employees or if the employees are in any way responsible for not taking the measures to protect themselves and keep a good Safety culture in the workplace.

Dear -----

You are being invited to take part in this research study as you have had experience working in places where Health and Safety rules and regulations have to be applied and put into practice to avoid incidents or accidents at the workplace. This research study aims to gain an understanding of the challenges and issues faced by an organization from different sectors in Dublin to give its employees all the necessary information and training related to Health and Safety for them to do their jobs in environments prone to high occupational risks and hazards.

This research is being carried out by Severino Gomes Diniz Neto as part of a Degree in Business Studies in Independent Colleges Dublin. The study is being conducted under the supervision of Prof Andrew Deegan and Dr. Daniel O'Sullivan (School of Business ICD).

Type of participant:

- I..... voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.

- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves...[outline briefly in simple terms what participation in your research will involve)
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being audio-recorded
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in my research project
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in [specify location, security arrangements and who has access to data] until [specific relevant period – for students this will be until the exam board confirms the results of their dissertation].
- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for [specific relevant period – for students this will be two years from the date of the exam board].
- I understand that under freedom of information legislation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Severino Gomes Diniz Neto 25/11/2022

Appendix 2; Inform consent for online survey

11/21/22, 12:36 AM

Health and Safety: An analysis of health and safety rules/regulations at workplaces in the city of Dublin

Health and Safety: An analysis of health and safety rules/regulations at workplaces in the city of Dublin

You are being asked to take part in a research study that aims to analysis of workplace health and safety rules/regulations of selected companies operating in the city of Dublin.

This research is being carried out by **Severino Gomes Diniz Neto** as part of a Degree in Business Studies in Accounting and Finance in Independent Colleges Dublin. The study is being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Daniel O'Sullivan and Mr. Anthony Kennelly** (School of Business ICD) and has been granted ethical approval by Independent College Dublin.

In this study, you will be asked to answer 10 questions related to your level of understanding about the health and safety rules and regulations in your company. The research typically takes 2-3 minutes to be completed.

Your participation is voluntary and you:

- May decide to stop being a part of the research study at any time without explanation required from you. You have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn / destroyed.
- Have the right to omit or refuse to answer or respond to any question that is asked of you.
- Have the right to have your questions about the procedures answered (unless answering these questions would interfere with the study's outcome. A full de-briefing will be given after the study).

The data I collect does not contain any personal information about you except your age. Your participation is anonymous, and your responses will be kept confidential.

This research has been reviewed according to Independent College Dublin procedures for research involving human subjects.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact **Dr.Daniel O'Sullivan**

daniel.osullivan@independentcolleges.ie

I will be glad to answer your questions about this study at any time.

Thank you in advance for your assistance

Severino Gomes Diniz Neto

* Required

1. **Do you consent to participate in this research? ***

Mark only one oval.

Yes

NO

Appendix 3; Online Survey

11/21/22, 12:38 AM

Health and Safety: An analysis of health and safety rules/regulations at workplaces in the city of Dublin

2. **What is your age? ***

Mark only one oval.

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55+

3. **What industry are you working in? ***

Mark only one oval.

Accounting/Business

Tourism & Hospitality

Recruiting/HR

Legal

Retail

Health Services

Construction

Other: _____

4. **Are there any health and safety rules/regulations at your workplace? ***

Mark only one oval.

Yes

NO

5. **Is your organization and employees following health and safety rules/regulations?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. **Does your organization encourage/promote safety culture at your workplace?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

7. **Safety culture is part of your organization's long term strategic plan.** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

8. **Are employees well trained to do their jobs in environments prone do high occupational risk and hazards?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. **Are employees given all required protective gears for necessary protections against workplace accidents?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

10. **Your organization's overall risk management practices with regards to health and safety are very effective.** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

11. **Your organization's overall risk management strategy is well communicated by management and understood by everyone in the organization?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

12. **Has your organization recently experienced any accidents due to breach in health and safety rules?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

13. **If the answer to the above question is yes, was there any financial impact suffered by your organization due to the breach of health and safety regulations?** *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

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Google Forms

Appendix 5; Copy of Ethical Form A

Form A: Application for Ethical Approval	
Undergraduate/Taught Postgraduate Research	
This form should be submitted to the module leader for the relevant initial proposal and/or the relevant supervisor if the proposal has already been accepted.	
Please save this file as <i>STUDENT NUMBER_AEA_FormA.docx</i>	
Title of Project	Health and Safety: An analysis of health and safety rules/regulations at workplaces in the city of Dublin.
Name of Learner	Severino Gomes Diniz Neto
Student Number	51707454
Name of Supervisor/Tutor	Dr Daniel O'Sullivan / Mr Anthony Kennelly

Check the relevant boxes. All questions must be answered before submitting to the relevant lecturer / supervisor. Note: only one box per row should be selected.

Item	Question	Yes	No	NA
1	Will you describe the main research procedures to participants in advance, so that they are informed about what to expect?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2	Will you tell participants that their participation is voluntary?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3	Will you obtain written consent for participation (through a signed or 'ticked' consent form)?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4	If the research is observational, will you ask participants for their consent to being observed.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Will you tell participants that they may withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6	Will you give participants the option of not answering any question they do not want to answer?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Will you ensure that participant data will be treated with full confidentiality and anonymity and, if published, will not be identifiable as any individual or group?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8	Will you debrief participants at the end of their participation (i.e., give them a brief explanation of the study)?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9	If your study involves people between 16 and 18 years, will you ensure that passive consent is obtained from parents/guardians, with active consent obtained from both the child and their school/organisation?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Item	Question	Yes	No	NA
10	If your study involves people less than 16 years, will you ensure that <u>active</u> consent is obtained from parents/guardians <u>and</u> that a parent/guardian or their nominee (such as a teacher) will be present throughout the data collection period?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	If your study requires evaluation by an ethics committee/board at an external agency, will you wait until you have approval from both the Independent College Dublin and the external ethics committee before starting data collection.	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	If you are in a position of authority over your participants (for example, if you are their instructor/tutor/manager/examiner etc.) will you inform participants in writing that their grades and/or evaluation will be in no way affected by their participation (or lack thereof) in your research?	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	If you are in a position of authority over your participants (for example, if you are their instructor/tutor/manager/examiner etc.), does your study involve asking participants about their academic or professional achievements, motivations, abilities or philosophies? (please note that this does not apply to QA1 or QA3 forms, or questionnaires limited to market research, that do not require ethical approval from the IREC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Will your project involve deliberately misleading participants in any way?	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
15	Is there any realistic risk of any participants experiencing either physical or psychological distress or discomfort?	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
16	Does your project involve work with animals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
17	Do you plan to give individual feedback to participants regarding their scores on any task or scale?	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
18	Does your study examine any sensitive topics (such as, but not limited to, religion, sexuality, alcohol, crime, drugs, mental health, physical health, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
19	Is your study designed to change the mental state of participants in any negative way (such as inducing aggression, frustration, etc?)	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
20	Does your study involve an external agency (e.g. for recruitment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
21	Do your participants fall into any of the following special groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	X	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Item	Question	Yes	No	NA
	<i>(except where one or more individuals with such characteristics may naturally occur within a general population, such as a sample of students)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If you have ticked any of the shaded boxes above, you should consult with your module leader / supervisor immediately. **You will need to fill in Form B Ethical Approval** and submit it to the Research & Ethics Committee **instead** of this form.

There is an obligation on the researcher to bring to the attention of the Research & Ethics Committee any issues with ethical implications not clearly covered by the above checklist.

I consider that this project has no significant ethical implications to be brought before the relevant Research & Ethics Committee. I have read and understood the specific guidelines for completion of Ethics Application Forms. I am familiar with the codes of professional ethics relevant to my discipline (and have discussed them with my supervisor).	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Name of Learner	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Student Number	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Date	Click or tap here to enter text.
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I have discussed this project with the learner in question, and I agree that it has no significant ethical implications to be brought before the Research & Ethics Committee.	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Name of Supervisor/Lecturer	Click or tap here to enter text.
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Date	Click or tap here to enter text.
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