



Challenges for a Safe Workplace and Cope Up Strategy: A Case Study for Construction Industry in Sarawak, Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Like many other parts of the globe, in Malaysia, construction industry has a vital support to the national economy, even though statistics indicates that, at the same time, it is an extremely risky profession due to high accident rate. In addition, current evidences suggest that, in general, safety in Sarawak construction industries lack attention. As, human behavior is regarded as the principal component that contributes to accidents in this industry, this study intends to explore existing barriers in development and maintaining safety performance behavior as well as possible coping strategies. A qualitative analysis of in-depth interview (N=4) among different levels of professions within industries in Kuching, Sarawak reveals that, price sensitive subcontracting, short-term projects, irregular cash flow, dependency on larger companies, less managerial and supervisory engagement, and priority on progress alone create obstacles for safety behavior. On the other hand, possibly, the challenges can be managed through integration of safety into contracts as compliance, associated disbursement, and introducing incentives.

Keywords: Construction industry in Sarawak; safety performance behavior

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BACKGROUND

Every occupation has its own inborn aspects of threat which are generally influenced by the structure of the particular organization,

communiqué, clarity in directives, safety beliefs, norms, skill and knowledge development, governance and accountability (Ismail, Doostdar, & Harun, 2012). Constant dynamics of technology and work practice repeatedly generate unique occupational risks and hazards. Even though significant responsiveness is addressed to safety initiatives at workplaces, occupational accidents affect twenty-one workers in every minute globally (O'Neill, Martinov-Bennie, & Cheung, 2013; Wahab, Rajab, Shaari, Rahman, & Saat, 2014).

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