ENSURING OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH FOR MANAGING INDUSTRIES IN ORGANISED WAY: INDIA’S LEADING AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURER AT A GLANCE

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Abstract

Ensuring occupational safety and health (OSH) by providing proper work environment is duty of organizations from moral & legal viewpoint to create organised industry. OSH reflects managerial policy that maintains workers health, working capacity, moral value, quality, safety, work culture, social climate, productivity, smooth operation aiming workers physical & mental wellbeing. This explanatory research attempts this crucial issue quoting a study of Tata Motors, among world’s leading and largest Indian automobile manufacturer, how efficiently they address OSH by policy formulation, assessment, implementation, minimizing workplace diseases/ risk-lost days/ injuries, as a benchmark of organised sector. They do safety perception survey, maintain safety standards, have OSH professional team-steering committee-divisional safety council-standard procedure, identify hazards, executes ergonomics & medical checkup, distribute guidelines, identify training need. They foster training & equipment, review performance, conduct safety audit, educate & reward. This paper motivates Indian present companies to follow guidelines and implement safe/healthy working environment to overcome occupational hazards/risk enhancing operation in organised way in every sector.

Keyword: Company, Health, Safety, Workers, Workplace,

Introduction: Occupational safety and health

Occupational safety and health (OSH) is crucial in terms of legal, moral, social and financial reasons. Every organisation has a fiduciary responsibility to take care that all stakeholders especially the workforces who are linked with the particular organisation must be safe at always. Legal background for occupational safety and health practices connects to the compensatory and preventative outcomes of laws which ensure employees safety and health. Ethical thrust will
make the company arrange the security of employee’s lives and protection of their health as responsibility. Additionally occupational safety and health is a means to decrease the chances of workers accidents and related injury as well as sickness and related costs, comprising sick leave, medical care and disability benefit costs. Ex Governor of U.S. state of Connecticut, Jodi Rell tells that, “At the end of the day, the goals are simple: safety and security.” Occupational safety and health (OSH) is in many places known as occupational health and safety or workplace health and safety. This is the field of study dealing with all kind of protection and safety, health management and social welfare of human resource involved with job. The objective of occupational safety and health initiative is to render a healthy and safe work place and related situation. Occupational safety and health also covers the area out side work place nowadays. It protects the various aspects of employee family members, co-workers, management, consumers or user of product and service, members of distribution channel, and all other people, on whom, workplace environment may have any impact. For this reason, the term occupational safety and health is uttered as occupational health and occupational and non-occupational safety in the USA and it includes complete safety for tasks accompanied outside of work place.

Relevance and Background of study

American author and researcher Tom Roth comments that, “ Employers who report receiving recognition and praise within the last seven days show increased productivity, get higher scores from customers, and have better safety records. They’re just more engaged at work.” Two important organisations that have connection in this field are International Labour Organisation and World Health Organisation. According to them, the main Emphasise in occupational safety and health is on three basic motto. These are the upgradation of work environment and making the work conducive to safety as well as health, secondly the maintenance and improvement of employee health and working capability; thirdly growth of work place and work cultures in proper direction. The direction should support safety and health in workplace. It should also induce a constructive social climate and hurdle free operation. In this way, occupational safety and health may enhance productivity of the organisation. The emergence of work culture is here to have a symbol of the required value systems of the organisation. This organisational culture’s outcome is seen practically in the human resource policy, leadership style, training-development policies, policy for workers participation and quality control system of the undertaking.

According to United States Senator Arlen Specter, “There’s nothing more important than our good health—that’s our principal capital asset.” According to International Labour Organisation and World Health Organisation, occupational safety and health is to target multiple matters. It should prevent damage of workers from health backed by their work conditions; the creation and retaining of the good extent of mental, physical and social welfare of employees in every job; maintaining workforces in a work environment aligned with his psychological and physiological capabilities; the protection of workers in their employment from risks resulting from factors adverse to health etc. In short, it helps matching of work to worker and of each worker to his work in a safe and sustainable manner. Roman philosopher and political theorist Marcus Tullis Cicero says, “The safety of the people shall be the highest law.” India also has so many rule

**Literature Review**

Heinrich (1931) was among the beginner researchers to nurture the field in the costs of accidents in workplace. Adam Smith during 1776, in his work “The Wealth of Nations”, argued that workers’ wages vary as per work conditions which they experience. It shows that there is a matter of risk in workplace. In 1978, the Supreme Court of Canada stipulated a maximum amount to be awarded for physical and mental harm by workplace injury that was $100,000. Different measurement concepts noted in clinical sciences, psychology and program evaluation may be implemented to OSH audits as per Lipsey (1983); McDowell (1987) and Stewart (1992). Cooper (1998) pointed that OSH audit is more than a hazard identification task and it must pursue a thorough appraisal of OHS management. Leigh et al (2000) emphasized regarding indirect costs of occupational risk belonging to the lost scopes of the injured worker, his family, the co-workers, the employer as well as the community. According to Goodchild et al (2002), due to workplace injury, quantity of human capital is decreased which has adverse effect on society’s capacity to produce goods and services both long and short term. Rates of occupational fatalities and accidents in India and China, are similar. It is respectively, 10.4 and 10.5 fatalities per 100,000 while 8,700 and 8,028 accidents per 100,000 as per ILO and WHO report (2003). Access Economics (2006) depicts that damage caused by accidents include organization’s equipments, machines and other property that create equipment repair/replacement costs, wastage of goods, clean-up/rearrangement costs etc. As per Benjamin O. Alli’s “Fundamental Principles of Occupational Health and Safety” (2008), OSH performance varies among several economic sectors within nations. Empirical data prove that, highest rates of workplace mortality take place globally in forestry, agriculture, construction and mining. ILO has shown a calculation that tropical logging accidents are responsible for more than 300 deaths per 100,000 workers. According to InfoChange News (April 2009), India has legislation about occupational safety and health for above 50 years. Still regulatory authorities are only 1154 factory inspectors, 1400 safety officers and 27 medical inspectors. These figures are not sufficient for taking care of formal organizations which only has about 1/10th of total workforce of our country.

**Objective**

According to Government of India, Ministry of Labour and Employment, the basic objective of National Policy on Safety, Health and Environment at workplace is to overcome the occurrence of work related diseases, injuries, disaster, fatalities and loss of country’s assets as well as getting top class occupational health, safety and environment performance and also to ensure well-being of workers and society. The objective of this research is to convince the present corporate strategy makers about the role and importance of occupational safety and health. The paper puts
focus on different issues associated with workplace hazards and necessary precautions which should be implemented by the respective employers. The paper highlights the case of Tata Motors, the leader in automobile industry as a benchmark in this field. The industry policy makers will be acquainted about the OSH policy and execution process of this industrial legend and will be motivated to ensure an effective OSH system in their production houses also. Thus the paper attempts to draw attention of academic and corporate sector to have an in-depth thought regarding safety and flourish of work life of contemporary industry’s human resource in ethical, legal and managerial perspective.

Research Methodology

The present research is an exploratory one. It explores the various issues of occupational safety and health in contemporary Indian context mainly. The paper addresses various matters in this field and describes the multiple steps taken by one of world’s largest automobile manufacturer Tata Motors for ensuring occupational safety and health which makes the study as a descriptive research. The research is based totally on secondary data. The information has been taken from different books, reports, projects, article and websites (corporate, informational and educational) for constructing the paper in objective oriented manner. The case of Tata Motors has been produced as a centre point of the paper that renders the category the paper as a case study. The case of Tata Motors has been studied from Tata Motors: Occupational health and safety chapter as well as their website. Again the references have been drawn about other researches, conceptual background, focus of the study and concluding portion including Govt of India, ILO, WHO etc from proper sources as their websites and other online form as report/project/article/book etc.

Tata Motors

The enriched “company profile” section depicted in Tata Motors website: www.tatamotors.com gives a broad view of this benchmark company. Established in 1945, Tata Motors Limited (previously known as TELCO or Tata Engineering and Locomotive Company) is an India based multinational vehicle producer company having headquartered in Mumbai belonging to Tata Group. Its automobile range includes trucks, passenger cars, coaches, vans, construction equipment, buses and military vehicles. This is largest automobile company of India, having consolidated revenues of INR 2,32,834 crores (USD 38.9 billion) in 2013-14. Tata Motors is leader in commercial automobile in all sectors and one of the top players in passenger automobile counted among best products in the compact car, midsized car and utility vehicle groups. This is fourth largest bus manufacturer and fifth largest truck manufacturer of the world. Tata Motors Group has more than 60,000 employees who follow the mission “to be passionate in anticipating and providing the best vehicles and experiences that excite our customers globally.” The company’s presence is spread across length and breadth of India. Today, above 8 million Tata vehicles run in India, since its rolling in1954. Tata Motor’s production houses in India are in multiple places such as Jamshedpur (Jharkhand), Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh), Pune (Maharashtra), Sanand (Gujarat); Pantnagar (Uttarakhand) and Dharwad
(Karnataka). The company by strategic alliance with Fiat in 2005, manufactures automobiles at Ranjangaon (Maharashtra) both Fiat and Tata cars and Fiat power trains. Tata Motor’s sales, services, dealership and spare parts network comprises over 6,600 touch points globally.

**Tata Motors Health and Safety approach**

Tata Motors “Occupational health and safety” chapter (Page 37-40) gives a detail description of their OSH philosophy and policies. Maintenance of safe work place is a matter of importance to them. They accept that a safe work situation imparts a feeling of confidence and security among their employees that ensures their productivity. They have laid down a companywide mechanism of occupational safety and health policy. The policy along with their robust execution and assessment evaluation assists them achieve their objective to minimise occupational injuries and workplace diseases. They work hard to ensure that all workers working within their premises of manufacturing units are safe from all related risks related to occupational safety. In this connection, the company has pursued an evaluation of the present safety systems through DuPont. Also they are attempting to raise the safety standards restlessy. This task may enable them to locate the gaps and assess existing situation. As an ingredient of this diagnostic, a safety perception survey has also been carried on to comprehend workers insights about safety.

Throughout their plants, they have devoted safety and health professionals teams dedicated to install safe work methods. Safety considerations have been installed into formal operating process at each operation in the work premises. Occupational hazards have been specified in identified areas of works comprising the paint shop, foundry, welding line and so on. Their corresponding job related safety mechanisms have been arranged. The company has procedures to take care that all the employees stepping into the factory premises are medically fit to accomplish the task for which they are assigned. Tata Motors has made a mandate for all employees to go through a primary health check-up during joining as well as same checkups at regular time frequency. A range of activities on fitness and wellness have been taken throughout the units. A ‘Health Index’ has been incorporated and an ergonomics study has been undergone to upgrade the occupational environment. Safety inspections and happenings are subjects to high preference for the top management which is directly involved in all safety related initiatives. A steering committee under the headship of Managing Director attends health, safety and environment matters in every monthly to have grip on performance and locate the areas of improvement. Occupational safety is ensured by a divisional safety council structure which includes the safety steward, divisional head, medical officer, and maintenance and production representative as well safety officer from the plant safety department. Employees take part in several IR committees and proactive safety committee to recommend and help to implement advancements at the work units. At present 210 of Tata Motors workforces belong to statutory plant level safety committees having equal representation from non-management and management staff. Apart from statutory plant level safety committees, the company holds management level safety committees also at their every plant.

The amount of reportable injuries are consistently reducing, the extent of near misses has risen resulted by enhanced safety awareness among Tata Motors staffs. Every identified injury is
reported and investigated. Among reportable injuries to their employees, 3 were sustained by
ladies resulting loss of 149 working days. They strive for meeting their goal of zero fatalities in
their work place. ZAP meetings take place throughout each plant and. Injury rate and lost day
rate are taken into account with care.

They have laid down a company wide system for contractor safety management to nurture a
safety culture within their contract workforce. The characteristics of this system are Frequent
safety trainings regarding work to contractor workmen, Depositing safety report in proper format
by each contractor by second of every month, Analyzing of safety performance on a single
platform, Distribution of safety guidelines for contractors with work order, Execution of personal
protective equipment provision in contractors job order, Mandatory safety induction training for
each contractor before starting work within the plant premises, Regular supervision and audit of
contractor work area, Appraisal of contractors on the basis of their safety efforts and rewarding
near miss reporting as well as workdays free of incident. Getting a declaration from contractor
according to requirements of the safety department (certifications, list of equipments, list of
workers with their medical records etc). Tata Motors choose service providers on basis of
 techno-commercial evaluation comprising of judgment of their safety practices. Also, they have
a safety committee meeting in monthly basis with the service provider, as a joint participating
device for handling any grievance. The in charge of the contract cell as well as its senior
members participate in this meeting followed by formulating a broad plan to implement the work
points, having the steps being evaluated in corresponding safety meeting. They tend to foster bi-
yearly safety performance review of the service providers to promote the better safety tasks.

In Tata Motors Lucknow plant, they have begun a mechanism of “Safety Alert Card” to upgrade
their reporting about incident and near miss. There workers fill up a card including the details of
any happenings and then drop the same into a collection centre on shop floor. It helps them to
grasp incidents in a regular and timely manner and to execute proper trainings needed to save
form those unfortunate happening in future course of time. They have also initiated a unique
suggestion campaign in addition, in order to obtain concepts on upgrading safety steps from their
workforces and making them aware on safety matters. They select topics related to safety each
month, for making their employees aware. Recently they have discussed on topics such as
storage and handling of hazardous materials, fire safety, over head safety, safe material handling,
road safety, electrical safety and so on. The management is also alert about the uninterrupted
well being of their workforce through employee health programmes apart from workplace safety
procedures. Employee health programme comprises of the Awareness on chronic diseases like
hypertension and diabetes with treatment support for that, Lectures and seminars on Health
awareness, Issuing diabetic card for record of necessary tests and their results and Blood testing.

Medical centers are present in each of their locations and render uninterrupted services. It
includes paramedical staff, qualified doctors and emergency basis medical equipment. SA 8000
team of Pune is a dignified example of altruistic service and societal responsibility by
broadcasting some crucial commodities to the employees in scrap yard. They have given head
scarves, summer coats, caps etc to the employees of scrap yard and attempt to repeat it bi-
annually. Within this broad activity, a medical check up of all the women workers also has taken place in their dispensary. The women being found subjected to adverse health conditions have been provided free consultancy and medicines by doctors of Tata Motors.

**Suggestion to contemporary industries**

According to Indian independence movement leader Mahatma Gandhi, “It is health that is real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver.” All employers’ responsibility is to take care that the occupational environment provides safety and health consciousness because workplace hazards may occur any time in the workplace. It is the responsibility of the management to prevent accidents and protect employees from occupational risks. But the accountability of management a bit further, to provide awareness of workplace hazards as well as a promise to accomplish all functions as per suitable safety and health policy in workplace. Employers should clarify how to do their tasks, as well as how to protect lives, activeness, mental and physical health of them and their co-workers during work. Managers and incharges should ensure that people are properly trained for the work and related aspects for which they are assigned. Various information programmes are to be arranged to foster information on the safety measures, precautions, health matters of job, and devices for prevention or minimising occupational hazards. Broadcasting safety and health massages will make a proper habit in workers. There should be choice of proper mechanism and technology that in which way works should be carried on. Again the management should impart safety and health training as a fundamental step for overcoming hazard. Employers should have regular evaluation on the efficiency of prevention and control of workplace hazards, and protection from work risks. In this regards a safety audit may be conducted. There must be all required arrangements of medical facilities. Proper systems must be there for compensating workplace injuries, including rehabilitation and way to get back to work. Additionally mental health of the workers should be taken into account by management for smooth working. There may be proper job description of works as all related risks of works should be known and eligibility of workers should be measured before joining. It should be remembered by the management that “Prevention is better than cure” and all arrangements are to be ready to ensure a safe and healthy environment which makes the work place free of negative occurrence. As per British racing driver Jackie Stewart, “It takes leadership to improve safety.”

**Conclusion**

Spiritual teacher and author Anne Wilson Schaef tells that, “Good Health is not something we can buy. However, it can be an extremely valuable savings account.” Health and safety of workforce is a significant issue of a corporation’s growth and effective working. This is a crucial parameter for success of an organization. This maintains an occupational environment that is free from hazard in any industrial set up. Organisations should focus on acquiring high organizational safety and health as much as they thrust for different prime objectives of their concerns. It is accepted that proper emphasize on health, safety and welfare of workforce would ensure value in all areas of an undertaking. It would decrease absenteeism and turn over, raise employee morale and accountability towards company, reduce chances of workplace injuries and illnesses,
improve productivity, decrease cost of compensation, enhance quality of manufactured products and/or rendered services, save from legal action, increase good will and a lot more. The Constitution of India too has mentioned provisions for maintaining occupational health and safety for workforce in some of Articles such as 24, 39 and 42. The Constitution of India quotes about the rights of citizens and also stipulates the Directive Principles of State Policy that aim to the tasks of the state to be guided. These Principles asks for ensuring the health and condition of employees (men and women) with just and humanistic environment for work. The major to minor issues like rules of labour and safety in mines and oil fields, the welfare of labour including provident funds, conditions of work, old age pension and maternity benefit etc are well laid down in writing. The Ministry of labour, Government of India and Labour Departments of the States and Union Territories are responsible for overseeing safety and health of workers of their territories. Directorate General Factory Advice Service, Directorate general of mines safety, Labour Institute, Ministry in technical aspects of occupational safety and health etc are some bodies in this regard. After all the policy is “safety first”. According to Roman historian Tacitus, “The desire for safety stands against every great and noble enterprise.”

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Appendix: Total safety performance of plants (Source: www.tatamotors.com)

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<th>2008-09</th>
<th>2009-10</th>
<th>2010-11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Near Misses</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1350</td>
<td>1632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reportable Injuries</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost days</td>
<td>8065</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatalities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor injuries</td>
<td>1056</td>
<td>814</td>
<td>783</td>
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Reference:

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