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SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SAFETY AND HEALTH OF EMPLOYEES AT WORK

Purpose. To elucidate the role of social responsibility and evaluate the contribution of subjects of labor protection management on business entity in solving problems of maintaining health and ensuring safety of employees in modern occupational conditions.

Methodology. Sociological research was carried out by interviewing respondents with various work experience. The obtained results were processed using probability statistical methods with further generalization and formalization.

Findings. On the basis of conducted study, it has been established that within the last twenty years the role of subjects of occupational safety management on business entity has been changing gradually, particularly the awareness of employers and employees of their responsibility in labor protection activities has increased; however, the awareness of state authorities for their responsibility in such activities has decreased. According to the obtained results, the formation of high-level occupational safety culture at business entities that include communication based on mutual trust, common perception of the importance of safety and confidence in the effectiveness of preventive measures, is quite actual at the present stage of economic development. The results of the study showed that 82 % of respondents indicated the main problem as a low level of competence of managers and employees in safety issues. Also, the respondents noted problems related to the organization of work (62 % of interviewed persons), including disagreement or misunderstanding of the main goals of the organization. Approximately one third of respondents (32 %) indicated excessive workload. A little more than half of the respondents (61 %) were willing to discuss occupational safety and took an active role in organizing a safe work environment.

Originality. Two main reasons were shown why respondents did not wish to discuss occupational safety issues, and as a result to, care about their own safety. The reasons reported were the motives of underestimating occupational hazards and motives related to the professional responsibilities. The identified dominant motives for omission of occupational hazards at work are related to the occupational safety culture.

Practical value. The obtained results will contribute to the formation of occupational safety culture, improve labour organization and eliminate the dominant factors of injuries and occupational morbidity. Specific meaning of occupational safety culture and common understanding of it by all members of the workforce plays a fundamental role in accident prevention. The reported results can interest employers and employees, as the main subjects of entrepreneurial activity, that they are fully responsible for their own and collective safety, as well as scientists studying issues related to occupational safety culture.

Keywords: *social responsibility, occupational safety and hygiene, maintaining health, occupational safety culture, decent work*

Introduction. Nowadays, the efficiency of any business entity and its economic indicators are closely related to the introduction of an occupational safety component into its management system, since work accidents may cause both direct and indirect costs and negatively affect the economic stability of the business entity, and its competitiveness. The problem of improvement of occupational safety management in Ukraine is still actual [1], in particular regarding the normative legal regulations [2]. The work accidents and occupational morbidity cause significant losses of countries' economic development and today they are more than 3.3 % of gross domestic product (GDP) per year for the economy of European Union [3]. The first place among the reasons of work accidents belongs to the organizational factor (75 % of the total number of accidents). According to Directives of the European Union, conventions of the International Labor Organization implemented in the legislative acts of Ukraine, the employer must provide safe and healthy workplace. However, most of injuries do not happen because of faulty equipment, but the employee's behaviour, which is inappropriate to work situation causing accidents at work [4].

In a lot of aspects, the employee's behavoiur is caused by the hidden occupational safety culture that is supported by the business entity. According to the results of study on the main reasons of accidents in mining industry, in most cases the accidents are caused by indirect actions done by employees because of ignorance and lack of understanding of the consequences that these actions can lead to. Such behaviour of em-

ployees can be explained by ineffective management and unsatisfactory organization of work [5]. The occupational safety culture is the main factor of maintaining health and ensuring safety of employees at work [6]. It has been reported that occupational safety culture can explain the human's behaviour that precedes an accident. However, occupational safety culture is not a cause of accidents, but it can only be a guideline in their further investigation and not be its conclusion [7].

Safety issues at the workplace are clearly established in general and special legislative acts, in particular in the regulatory documents of the business entity. However, sufficient level of safety culture at business entity cannot be achieved using only regulatory documents. The main feature of high level of safety culture is awareness of employers that safety behaviour is their own responsibility and they should be encouraged to increase its level [8].

The formation of sufficient level of safety culture is purposeful and always long-term process requiring strong commitment to safety goals and a policy of openness in discussing the complex range of issues arising during the implementation of measures aimed at preserving the health and guaranteeing the safety of employees. Business entities dealing with the formation of appropriate occupational safety culture should encourage both employees and employers to realize the consequences of their actions on other people, safety of themselves and environment. Work [9] reported that minimization of human factor as a reason of accidents at work required a systematic approach.

In this article we assessed the peculiarities of occupational safety culture formation of employees on the basis of clear realizing of responsibility for their own and collective safety and

their readiness to actively participate in labor protection activities on business entity.

Literature review. There are several main theories explaining causes of accidents at work [10, 11].

One of the most cited and widespread theory is the one proposed by Dr. James Reason in 1990. This theory is called "the theory of Swiss cheese". According to this theory, every stage of work process can be potentially dangerous. Protection of each stage can be represented by a piece of Swiss cheese, in which possible safety problems and technical failures are indicated by the holes in the cheese. In this theory there are two groups of causes leading to accidents at work: active and latent. When active causes of accident are realized, dangers will happen with high probability. Meanwhile, latent causes can remain potentially dangerous for a long time. The main postulate of this theory is that errors in the production process do not occur separately from each other. According to this theory, one failure activates another one, and when they coincide at several stages, this will lead to accidents. Thus, accidents will happen if holes coincide. If the holes do not match, then the problem is detected and the accident will not occur.

The next most cited theory is the one proposed by H. W. Heinrich in 1931, known as the "domino theory". It is suggested that accident is a result of a series of consecutive events. Social factor, environment, individual factor, dangerous actions, mechanical or physical hazards, accident, injury etc. are the beginning of such sequence. As expected, the elimination of one link in the "domino" will prevent an accident.

In 2013 G. Fu proposed causality model called "2−4" cause accident or 24 model. The model is based on theories proposed by James Reason, H. Heinrich, and Tang [11]. There are internal and external causes of accidents. The internal factors include four levels: direct, indirect, radical and root causes. The direct causes refer to dangerous actions and conditions. The indirect causes include knowledge of safety rules, awareness of hazards, habituation to hazards, psychological and physiological state of an employee. The radical causes are related to management of safety system on business entity. The root causes are the elements of occupational safety culture [12−14].

In contrast to "domino theory", Ferrell states accidents as the results of human error [11]. The author explains his theory using assumption that accidents are caused by human itself. There are three main causes of accidents: overwork, incompatibility and inappropriate activity. Each of these causes actually are broad categories containing several more specific reasons.

Having analyzed all the theories, we can conclude that the so-called human factor is a significant reason for the occurrence of an accident in each of the theories. Human factor is not a cause of accident at workplace by itself, however, it can be a key to elucidate the other factors of work process effecting the employees' actions. The study of interaction between all elements of work process, such as employees, workplaces and management systems, will be able to explain the actions of employees and reveal the problems in organization of occupational safety activities [15].

A systematic approach to ensuring safety of employees at workplace deals with human error as a consequence of other causes related to occupational safety culture. Occupational safety culture on business entity is a result of individual and collective values, attitudes, perceptions, competencies and behaviour patterns, as well as the style and quality of safety management. High level of occupational safety culture is characterized by communication on basis of mutual trust, common perception of the importance of safety and trust in the effectiveness of preventive measures [16].

Sharing information about safety within organization is a vitally important component for creating and supporting safe workplace [17, 18]. Informing about safe work practices from managers is an important component of safety; however, reporting workplace safety issues from workers is critical for improving or maintaining workplace safety. Reporting the occupational safety issues

by employees will help to identify problems, eliminate them, prevent their realization and create a safe environment.

The unsafe work conditions are a burden for employees, employers, and society in general. It has been established that losses caused by occupational injuries and unsafe work conditions are unevenly distributed, in particular: employers account for about 14 %, employees − 27 %, and the state − 59 % of all costs [19]. These results show that employers' stimulus to reduce the level of occupational injuries is somewhat lower. They usually compensate the loss of profit caused by decrease of production volume by changing the cost of production. It is extremely difficult to evaluate the loss for an individual employee in monetary equivalent. Meanwhile temporal consequences of occupational injuries are almost impossible to be estimated. The state has the largest part of loss caused by occupational accidents and morbidity. It includes health care costs, pensions due to permanent disability, temporary disability benefits, etc. It should be noticed that the state's fund is formed from employees' taxes, thus employees have the largest losses from occupational injury and they should be the most interested in decreasing of its level. Released budget funds due to decrease in occupational injury can be used for other social programs that are interesting for employees.

Methods. The investigation was conducted by interviewing employees with various work experience. The obtained results were processed using probability statistical methods with further generalization and formalization.

The validity of the survey results depends on the structure and representativeness of the sample, which is determined by its aim. The aim of the study was to elucidate the role of social responsibility in ensuring the employees's safety and health and evaluate the contribution of labour protection management subjects of business entity through the prism of the problem vision by students with work experience. Since students will be some specialists, managers in the future, thus the formation of their occupational safety culture should be taken into special account during obtaining higher education.

Results and discussion. The main subjects in ensuring occupational safety and health at workplace according to requirements of European legislation in labor protection are employers and employeesa. Implementation of this European approach to management of oocupational safety first of all requires the awareness of responsibility for creating and maintaining healthy and safe working conditions at the workplace.

During twenty years from 2002 to 2022 we have carried out the survey of respondents about their awareness of subjects' responsibility for the creating and maintaining of healthy and safe work conditions at workplace (Fig. 1). The number of respondents ranged from 370 to 410 depending on year, which was sufficient for reliability of the results.

At the beginning of this century almost half of the respondents thought that issues related to occupational safety on business entity should be solved by state authorities, one third of the respondents answered − employers and approximately every fifth − employees. Such attitude to issues of occupation-
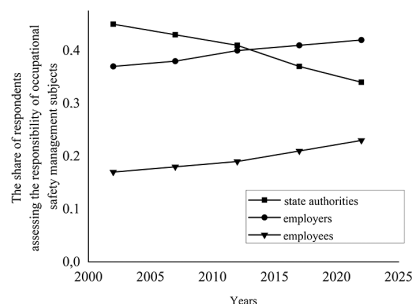

Fig. 1. Temporal changes in assessment of the role of occupational safety management subjects for ensuring healthy and safe work conditions:

1 − state authorities; 2 − employers; 3 − employees

al safety, obviously, is a heritage from central management in the former Soviet Union.

In the last twenty years the situation has changed, but not significantly: the awareness of the state authorities' role in occupational safety slightly decreased from 0.43 to 0.37, meanwhile for employers and employees it slightly increased from 0.37 to 0.42 and from 0.17 to 0.23 respectively. The tendency in the awareness of responsibility of different subjects of occupational safety management is good, but these changes are not enough for present day.

Such tendencies in awareness of the role of employers, employees and state authorities in solving problems of occupational safety should be supported in any way, in particular, through educational programs for bachelors. These programs should provide the formation of occupational health and safety competencies in students based on a risk-oriented approach to the management of occupational health and safety in modern conditions. Training of specialists in occupational health and safety field in specialty 264 Occupational safety is now very actual.

The high-level occupational safety culture on business entity can be formed only when factors which prevent such formation are determined. One of these factors is employees' staying silent about safety problems [20]. When situation is dangerous, employees should take responsibility for the problem to be eliminated. This is possible in a team with responsible and careful attitude to safety issues.

The survey was conducted to identify factors that did not contribute into formation of occupational safety culture on business entity. 346 respondents took part in the survey: 87 % of women and 13 % of men.

The survey results showed, that more than half of the respondents (62.5 %) from time-to-time detected problems connected with safety of professional activity, 10.1 % — often, and 27.4 % — never detected such problems (Fig. 2). Also, it was established that violations of occupational safety requirements were very often, approximately on three business entities among four studied. We suggested that it resulted from decrease in the level of the state authorities' control (positive moment) and absence of appropriate social responsibility on business entities (negative moment). Such a transitional period is characteristic for many processes, thus there is a task to decrease it through formation of occupational safety culture in employees.

Also, it was suggested for the respondents to assess the significance of problems appeared the most often and had the most important effect on occupational safety culture formation (Fig. 3).

The investigation results of showed that the main problem indicated by 82 % of respondents was a low level of the managers' and the employee's competency in occupational safety issues. The respondents also indicated that there were problems connected with organization of work (62 %), including disagreement or incomprehension of the main goals of business entity functioning. About one third of the respondents (32 %) paid attention on excessive workload at work. Meanwhile moral-ethical problems were not dominant in the obtained results of the survey (14 %).

The obtained results of the study are well correlated with statistic data for occupational injuries. According to these data the main cause of work accidents was the organizational factor. Increasing the the level of competence includes careful
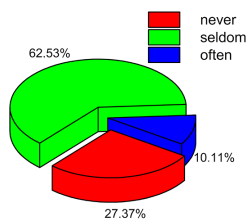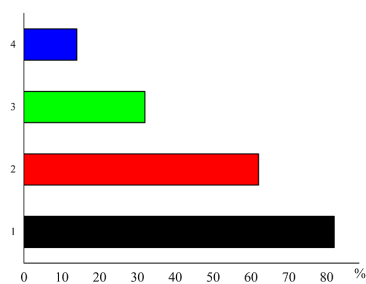
Fig. 3. The significance of problems of occupational safety culture formation connected with:

1 — competency of managers and employees in occupational safety issues; 2 — organization of work; 3 — excessive workload at work; 4 — moral-ethical problems

and continuous training of employees on occupational safety. Improved safety training, increased knowledge and awareness of potential hazards reduce the probability of an accident.

The conducted survey of the respondents on their readiness to discuss occupational safety issues as well as take active part in organization of safety environment, showed that only slightly more than half of the respondents (61 %) gave an affirmative answer (Fig. 4). Approximately one third of the respondents (28 %) have not yet decided on this issue, and 11 % of the respondents are not ready to actively participate in the organization of a safe occupational environment.

The obtained results prompted us to clarify the motives of employees' staying silent abouts issues of their professional safety and, as a result, not to show concern for personal safety at the workplace.

We used a questionnaire proposed in work [17] to find out the reasons effecting the employees staying silent about occupational safety issues. The respondents were proposed the list of 26 statements, where they need to choose the most important ones, based on their own professional experience.

I do not discuss occupational safety with my supervisor because ...:

1. I feel that this may lead to a negative perception of me.
2. I do not want to start a dispute between others.
3. I think my colleagues will lose respect for me.
4. I feel that others may take revenge on me for my opininon.
5. I feel that if I speak, it will be difficult to work with others.
6. I feel that it might hurt the colleagues' feelings.
7. I do not want to annoy others.
8. It will put pressure on my colleagues.
9. My managers do not want to hear about safety issues.
10. My managers do not support safety activities.
11. I feel my management will not take any action.
12. Safety issues are not a priority in my organization.
13. I feel that I cannot speak honestly and openly in my organization.
14. There is no clear signal of safety issues at my workplace.
15. I feel my managers are not doing their job to solve the problem.
16. I do not feel comfortable enough with my supervisor.
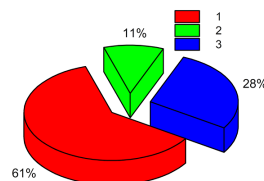17. No one is exposed to excessive risk due to safety issues.

Fig. 2. The frequency of detection of professional activity safety problems

Fig. 4. The readiness of the respondents to discuss issues of occupational safety:

1 — ready to discuss and participate in organization of safe environment; 2 — not ready to discuss and participate in organization of safe environment; 3 — have not decided on the question of discussion

18. Safety issues are not a threat to anyone.

19. Safety problems do not affect other employees.

20. There were no negative consequences because of safety problems.

21. Nothing bad happened because of safety problems.

22. Safety problems are not life-threatening.

23. I have a lot of work.

24. I am too busy at work to talk about safety.

25. I feel a lot of pressure at work.

26. It seems to me that this is not specified in my duties.

These statements were combined into six main groups of motives of occupational safety problems concealment during professional activity, in particular:

1) personal motives;

2) motives related to other employees;

3) motives related to the relationships in the team;

4) motives related to the climate in the team;

5) motives related to assessment of safety problems;

6) motives related to professional duties.

The personal motives of dangers concealment include employees' belief that their statements may negatively affect them or create a negative image.

The second group of motives is based on the fear of creating problems for the colleagues. The employees do not discuss occupational safety problems, because they think that reporting hazards will provoke conflict, hurt a colleague's feelings or destroy coordinated team work.

Silence based on relationships in the team concerns staying silent about safety issues because it might affect relationships with colleagues. Additionally, employees may stay silent on safety issues if they feel that this will make it difficult to work with managers or colleagues.

The motives related to the climate in the team can be defined as silence about occupational safety issues based on the organizational climate. The employees do not discuss occupational safety issues since there is no such practice on business entity and these issues are not a priority for the management.

The motives related to assessment of safety problems are that employees underestimate dangers. The employees think that there is a high probability that problem will not realize or its realization will not lead to negative results.

Silence motives related to professional duties can be considered as certain features in the work. In particular, employees can stay silent if solving safety issues is not a part of their duties.

The survey results presented in Fig. 5, revealed two main groups of motives, that most often led to concealment of occupational safety problems: motives related to underestimating dangers (group 5) and motives related to professional duties (group 6). Approximately 25 % of the respondents indicated these two groups. Other groups were chosen by a less number of the respondents: group 4 − 17; 3 − 9; 2 − 16; 1 − 8 %.

The noticed dominant motives of dangers silencing are related to the occupational safety culture, as reported in works [17, 20]. Thus, there is observed employees' indifference to occupational safety issues, decrease in professional knowledge level and demandingness to perform the duties in teams with low level of occupational safety culture.

Obviously, the problem of underestimating dangers depends on efficiency of occupational safety teaching, where significant attention is paid to prevention scale accidents occurring not so often in comparison with hazards resulted from non-compliance or ignoration of occupational safety rules.

The low level of occupational safety culture effects employees in the way they do not wish to take part in organization of occupational safety activities and thus do not want to discuss occupational safety issues if they are not the part of employees' duties. The calculation of probability of appropriate group statements choice indicated, that the least full answer was for silence motives related to the climate in the team (Fig. 6).

It is an integral term that includes corporate policies, management attitudes and employee beliefs about workplace safety.
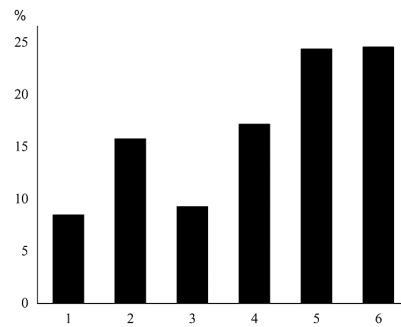

Fig. 5. The percentage of the respondents with maximal assessment of motives related to silence of occupational safety issues (group numbers are indicated according to defining of groups)

Meanwhile, issues related to occupational safety culture were assessed more fully. The respondents noted the dominance of motives related to relationships in the team and personal motivation.

The investigation results showed that the noted dominant motives were the first step in the formation of occupational safety culture. The motives related to professional duties remained undervalued, and the issues of the climate in the team were unclear to the respondents at all. The term of safety climate is similar to the term of safety culture. However, the latter term refers more specifically to individual attitudes toward occupational safety that is in organization, while safety climate refers to how these attitudes are collectively understood.

Conclusions. The accidents occur most often because of organization reasons where the human factor plays the main role. On the basis of the obtained results, it has been established that within the last twenty years the role of subjects of occupational safety management on business entity has been changing gradually, particularly the awareness of employers and employees of their responsibility in occupational safety activities has increased; however, the awareness of state authorities of their responsibility in such activities has decreased. However, this is not enough for present, and the study on safe behaviour issues at work remains relevant.

The employee's behaviour depends on the occupational safety culture that has formed in the team. In order to change the occupational safety culture, it is first necessary to identify problems existing on business entity. One of the effective research methods is the study on the willingness of employees to actively participate in the formation of a safety culture. In this work, we used a survey to find out the main reasons of the silence of occupational safety issues. It was established that about 50 % of the dominant motives were related to the occupational safety culture. Therefore, the formation of occupational safety culture contributes to the improvement of work organization and the elimination of the dominant factors of injuries and occupational morbidity. The occupational safety culture consists of a set of safety beliefs, values or principles. The specific content of the occupational
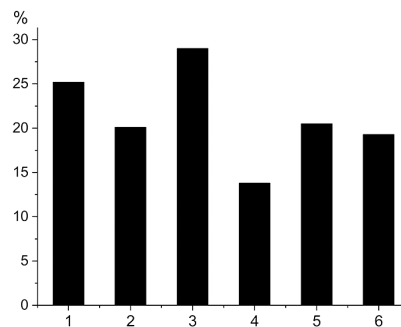

Fig. 6. The probability of statement choice of appropriate group of motives in percent (group numbers are indicated according to defining of groups)

safety culture and its common awareness by the members of the organization plays a fundamental role in preventing accidents. Employers and employees, as the main subjects of business entity, must realize that they are fully responsibile for their own and collective safety. A team that features this understanding can be called conscious and responsible for occupational safety issues. Since today there is not a sufficient level of awareness of such responsibility, there is still a need for further research that will allow to determine the dominant motives in prompting employees to actively participate in solving occupational safety issues.

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Соціальна відповідальність за безпеку та здоров'я працівників на роботі

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Мета. З'ясувати роль соціальної відповідальності та оцінити вклад суб'єктів управління охороною праці на об'єкті господарювання у вирішенні питань збереження здоров'я й гарантування безпеки працівників у сучасних умовах праці.

Методика. Соціологічні дослідження проводили шляхом опитування респондентів з різним стажем роботи та подальшим використанням імовірнісностатистичних методів опрацювання одержаних результатів з наступним їх узагальненням і формалізацією.

Результати. На підставі проведених досліджень виявлено, що впродовж останніх двадцяти років роль суб'єктів управління охороною праці на об'єкті господарювання поступово змінюється: підвищується усвідомлення відповідальності роботодавців і найманих працівників та зменшується усвідомлення відповідальності органів державної влади. Встановлено, що формування високого рівня культури безпеки праці на суб'єкті господарювання, що характеризується спілкуванням на основі взаємної довіри, спільного сприйняття важливості безпеки й довіри до ефективності профілактичних заходів, є досить актуальним на сучасному етапі розвитку економіки. Результати досліджень показали, що найголовніша проблема, яку відзначили 82 % опитаних, — це низький рівень компетентності керівників і працівників з питань безпеки праці. Респонденти також відзначають наявність проблем, що пов'язані з організацією праці (62 % опитаних), у тому числі й незгоду або нерозуміння головних цілей у роботі організації. Близько третини респондентів (32 % опитаних) звертають увагу на надмірну завантаженість під час трудової діяльності. Трохи більше, ніж половина респондентів (61 % опитаних) готові обговорювати питання безпеки праці та брати активну роль в організації безпечного виробничого середовища.

Наукова новизна. Обґрунтовано, що небажання респондентів обговорювати питання професійної безпеки і, як наслідок, не виявляти турботу про особисту безпеку зумовлено двома головними причинами: це мотиви недооцінювання виробничих небезпек і мотиви, пов'язані із професійними обов'язками. Виявлені нами домінантні мотиви замовчування виробничих небезпек на роботі пов'язані з культурою безпеки праці.

Практична значимість. Одержані результати сприятимуть формуванню культури безпеки праці, покращенню організації праці та усуненню домінантних чинників травматизму та професійної захворюваності. Специфічний зміст культури безпеки праці та спільне розуміння її усіма членами трудового колективу відіграє фундаментальну роль у запобіганні аварій. Наведені результати повинні зацікавити роботодавців і працівників, як головних суб'єктів підприємницької діяльності, оскільки вони несуть усю відповідальність за власну й колективну безпеку.

Ключові слова: *соціальна відповідальність, безпека та гігієна праці, збереження здоров'я, культура безпеки праці, гідна праця*