

## The Effect of Practices in Occupational - Employee Health and Safety on Employees' Organizational Trust: A Case on Five Star Hotels

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### Extensive Summary

#### Introduction

The laws and regulations regarding the prevention of negative factors of health and safety issues are deterrent. At the same time they are important for the employer in terms of the protection of the work environment and hygiene conditions in production; for the employee they are important in terms of protection of mental and physical health, security in the organization, providing financial and moral support to the family and the continuation of social rights within the retirement period (Akar Şahingöz ve Şık, 2015, p.14). In the tourism sector, seasonal high workload, especially during the holidays and summer months, makes it easier to employ uninsured and unsecured employees at the weekend or at night when many of the workforce do not work, and this led to the workforce who are not well educated, could not protect themselves from occupational accidents and diseases, fear from losing their jobs and worry about social security. The increase in tourism organizations also supports the increase in employment and competition, and it causes the employees to face various risk factors in this sector. These reasons make the tourism sector more prominent in terms of occupational accidents and diseases (Kavurmacı and Demirdelen, 2015). On the other hand, long working hours, complexity of working time, inadequate rest in tourism industry negatively affect physical endurance, resilience, power and attention and causes accidents in organizations (Boz, 2006). In this study, occupational-employee health and safety and organizational trust topics were investigated. Improvement of irregular working conditions, regular training about occupational health and safety practices and adaptation of auditing conditions in organizations increase the employees' commitment to the organization.

Studies on occupational health and safety were mainly focused on agriculture (Sakartepe, 2016; Şık, 2017; Aktuna, 2017), mining (Toygar, 2017), industry (Açıkalın,

2008; Güngör, 2008; Korkmaz, 2011; Erođlu, 2015; Kıratlı, 2015 etc.), construction (Bostan, 2012; Ően, 2017; Yanık, 2017 etc.), health (Haktanır, 2011; Ünaldı, 2017; Arıkan, 2017). Although hotel enterprises are in the service sector, working conditions are heavy and wages are not satisfying etc. And these elements are so important that they cannot be ignored. In spite of this, in the tourism sector, there are not many studies done as in other sectors. From this point of view, it is possible to state that in hotel enterprises the effect of occupational-employee health and safety practises on the levels of organizational trust is an important topic that should be studied. Even though the hotel establishments are in less dangerous class and they have more severe conditions than the other occupations, the studies conducted mainly with the literature review and importance to the practices was not given. In this context, in this study, it is aimed to provide significant benefits to the sector, enterprises, managers, employees, relevant literature and researchers. In this context, the hypothesis of the study was developed in the direction of the above-mentioned theoretical framework;

**Hypothesis:** Practices on occupational-employee health and safety in hotel enterprises have a significant effect on the trust of employees to the organization.

### **Method**

Survey technique was used as data collection method in the survey. The universe of the study covers employees in five star hotel enterprises operating in Afyonkarahisar province. In the study; factors like error margin, level of reliability, incomplete or false coding and reaching potentiality to the target group were taken into account and in order to represent the universe, more questionnaires than limit value were applied. As a result, within the possibilities of the researcher, 700 questionnaires were distributed to the hotel enterprises, and the number of returning inquiries was 550, of which 515 were considered to be valid. For the statistical analysis of obtained data; percentile, frequency, arithmetic mean, standard deviation and validity / reliability analysis were done. On the other hand, correlation analysis was used in order to determine the relationship between employees' views on occupation-employee health and safety and organizational trust. In addition, simple linear regression analysis was applied to determine the effect of employees' perceptions of occupational-employee health and safety practices on organizational trust.

### **Findings**

When the arithmetic mean and standard deviation values of 515 employees' responses were examined, the arithmetic average of opinions (dimensional and general) about OEHS (Occupational-Employee Health and Safety) practices were found 3,57. In addition, when the responses to the occupational-employee health and safety scale were examined, the occupational health sub-dimension having the highest arithmetic mean value in all the sub-dimensions was found as  $\bar{X}= 3.81$ , and the employee health dimension was found  $\bar{X} = 3.40$  with the lowest arithmetic average value. The arithmetic

average of the organizational trust scale was found 3.68. In addition, when the responses in organizational trust scale were examined, the sub-dimension of financial power had the highest arithmetic average value as  $\bar{X} = 3.92$  and the objective performance evaluation dimension was found as  $\bar{X} = 3.25$  with lowest arithmetic mean value.

According to the findings; the relationship between occupational-employee health and safety and organizational trust is high ( $r = 0,734$ ). In other words, as occupational-employee health and safety increase, the organizational trust will increase. According to the results of simple linear regression analysis performed to determine the effect of occupational-employee health and safety on organizational trust, the linear regression model between the variables was found significant ( $p < 0,01$ ). Model's explanation rate was found nearly 54%, and this shows that changes in employees' organizational trust have an important effect on employees' occupational-employee health safety perceptions. In other words, when the views of employees towards the occupational-employee health and safety practices positively increase, organizational trust increases. This suggests that the hypothesis of "practices on occupational-employee health and safety in hotel enterprises have a significant effect on the trust of employees to the organization" was supported.

### **Discussion and Suggestions**

Occupational-employee health and safety practices has become more important after the industrial revolution, with the increase on the number of workers lost their lives as a result of work accidents and occupational diseases. This development is important because it prevents people from being harmed and prevents social and economic losses. Hazardous working environments primarily affect employees. In fact employees, who constitute a large part of the population of the countries, being negatively affected in terms of health, influence work places and the society negatively in the economic and social direction. Occupational-employee health and safety practices are concerned with employees' health and safety. It protects employees against the risks that may arise in the work environment thus it provides the employees to continue their physical and mental well-being. Employees with good physical and mental condition continue to work in a healthy and safe manner (Güvercin, 2015: 80). Work-related occupational-employee health and safety issues show various characteristics according to the working areas. The service sector, and therefore tourism, is often referred to as a "low risk" sector when compared to the industry sector. However, this qualification is often unrealistic (Uca Özer, Tüzünkan and Çavuşgil Köse, 2013: 1136).

The results of the research revealed that the relationship between occupational-employee health and safety and organizational trust is high. This result shows that organizational trust will increase if occupational-employee health and safety increases. The linear regression model between the variables was found significant ( $p < 0,01$ ).

Model's explanation rate (54%) shows that changes in employees' organizational trust have important effect on employees' occupational-employee health safety perceptions. In other words, when the views of employees towards the occupational-employee health and safety practices increase, organizational trust increases. This suggests that the hypothesis of "practices on occupational-employee health and safety in hotel enterprises have a significant effect on the trust of employees to the organization" was supported.

When the findings obtained from this study were evaluated, some suggestions were developed. These suggestions are presented as follows:

- ✓ Employees should get periodic health check-ups from the beginning of the recruitment period (the working conditions of each department are different)
- ✓ The laws, legislation and regulations that the government has made should be followed and briefings should be given to employees.
- ✓ Daily machine-equipment checks must be performed prior to starting shifts during shift changes.
- ✓ The employer should assign department heads to conduct inspections. This issue should be followed up with ISGB (Workplace Health and Safety Agency) / OSGB (Mutual Health and Safety Agency) specialists at regular intervals.
- ✓ Workplace doctors and nurses must be available in the enterprise. In addition, a certified first aid team trained in the authorized institutions should be established.
- ✓ Practices related to OEHS should be carried out at regular intervals (Pelit and Gülen, 2017).
- ✓ Working conditions of employees with long working hours should be altered.
- ✓ The organization should give all the employees OEHS training (OSGB / ISGB) without discrimination regarding the level of education of the employees (primary school, high school, etc.).
- ✓ Occupational-employee health and safety practices should be implemented in other tourism enterprises, and other organizational behaviour issues may be studied.

As a result, the opinions of the employees in Afyonkarahisar province regarding occupational-employee health and safety and organizational trust were discussed and some suggestions were made. In addition to the above suggestions, the employer should establish appropriate working conditions and improve the existing conditions in order for the employees to work comfortably and confidently.