



Assessment of Occupational Safety Practices and Workplace Risk Awareness Among Industrial Workers

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ABSTRACT

Occupational safety is critical in industrial workplaces where workers can be subjected to mechanical, chemical, electrical, ergonomic and environmental hazards. This paper has evaluated the level of risk awareness and occupational safety behavior among the industrial workers and how they are associated with formal safety training. The study was a quantitative cross-sectional survey with 80 industrial workers using a structured questionnaire consisting of five demographic items and 25 Likert-scale statements. The tool evaluated awareness about workplace risks, PPE and safety, safety training and emergency preparedness, safety compliance and hazard reporting, and organizational safety support. Analysis of data was done by frequency, percentage, mean, SD, chi-square test, correlation and regression. The risk awareness and general occupational safety practices at the workplace were on the high level, the organization safety support and training-related dimensions were on the moderate level. Occupational safety-practice level was highly related to formal safety training ($\chi^2 = 5.98$, $p = 0.014$). Occupational safety practices had a significant positive relationship with risk awareness at work ($r = 0.598$, $p < 0.001$). Regression analysis established that risk awareness was a significant predictor of safety practices, and was able to explain 35.8% of the variation in safety-practice scores. The safety awareness and practice of industrial workers were positive, yet organizational support and training was possible to reinforce. Occupational safety performance can be further improved by regular occupational safety training, good supervision, better provision of PPE, and better communication on safety.

Keywords

Occupational safety; Workplace risk awareness; Industrial workers; Safety practices; Safety training

1. INTRODUCTION

The occupational safety is one of the important facets of industrial work since workers are often subjected to machines, chemicals and dust as well as heat, noises, electricity, and physically demanding work. Such circumstances can cause injuries, accidents, and decreased well-being in case of insufficient preventive measures. Poor quality of life in factory workers is linked to their occupation hazards, which underscores the necessity of effective workplace protection (Ibrahim et al., 2024). Occupational health

services help to safeguard workers as well since they deal with physical and psychosocial hazards and foster healthier work environments (Jain et al., 2021). There are various types of hazards such as physical, mechanical, chemical, electrical, ergonomic and environmental hazards that affect industrial workers. Unsafe machinery, dangerous materials, high noise levels, inadequate ventilation, dust, heat and inappropriate design of the workplace can contribute to the risk of injury or disease. The presence of these hazards as

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evidenced by occupation suggests that they should be systematically controlled and monitored (Che Huei et al., 2020). Fast risk evaluation may assist in determining unsafe operations and enhancing the awareness of the workers about the hazards (Ispășoiu et al., 2024). Safety systems based on technology have also gained significance regarding the identification of hazards, monitoring, and prevention of hazards (Nnaji & Karakhan, 2020).

Workplace risk awareness is defined as the capacity of the workers to identify hazards, their effects, and unsafe working conditions. This is especially critical in industrial facilities where workers are exposed to machinery, chemicals and complicated work patterns with high contact with machinery and chemicals. Recognition of occupational risks has been associated with increased risk assessment and the increased use of protective measures (Agu et al., 2022). Occupational risk assessment should also consider the workers and their level of knowledge and awareness, especially in high-risk industries (Patyk & Nowak-Senderowska, 2022). Low awareness can contribute to a higher susceptibility to workplace risks that can be prevented (Mukhtad et al., 2021). Some of occupational safety practices are the wearing of personal protective equipment, adherence to safety guidelines, proper handling of machines, reporting hazards and near misses, unsafe shortcuts, and emergency preparedness. Such actions minimize risks at work and aid in preventing accidents. Both individual activities and organization systems are crucial to effective safety performance. Hazard control, worker involvement, supervision, and communication are critical components of enhanced safety performance in safety-management frameworks (Khalid et al., 2021). Connected-worker and wearable technologies are also applied to aid real-time safe monitoring and productivity (Patel et al., 2022).

Safety training is needed to enhance the hazard awareness, knowledge and emergency response of workers. Effective training initiatives will reinforce knowledge of safe practices and promote safer conduct. The use of novel training methods has demonstrated positive impacts on safety learning among workers (Nykänen et al., 2020). Virtual reality has been applied to offer realistic

safety training without putting the employees at risk (Joshi et al., 2021). On a larger scale, immersive technologies have shown their potential in enhancing occupational safety education and management (Babalola et al., 2023). A learning culture within a workplace that supports safe practices is also a key to effective knowledge transfer (Duryan et al., 2020). The organizational support and safety culture have a great impact on worker behavior. When management considers safety to be a priority and supervisors monitor compliance, employees are more likely to adhere to safety procedures. It has been linked to improved safety performance via safety culture and safety climate (Kalteh et al., 2021). Availability of strong safety culture can also facilitate performance of the organization at large (Bautista-Bernal et al., 2024). Digital planning methods such as building information modelling have also aided in hazard prevention in planning of workplaces (Fargnoli and Lombardi, 2020).

Occupational risks persist despite regulation, training and technological advancement due to the lack of safety behavioral translation despite awareness. The modern occupational safety strategies thus focus on the interplay between the knowledge of the workers, the identification of risks, and organizational mechanisms (Pishgar et al., 2021). The aims of the current study were to evaluate the risk awareness and occupational safety behaviors of industrial workers, and to examine the relationship between these variables and formal safety training and safety related behavior.

Objectives of the study

- 1.To assess workplace risk awareness and occupational safety practices among industrial workers.
- 2.To examine the association of safety training and workplace risk awareness with occupational safety practices among industrial workers.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Study Design

A quantitative cross-sectional survey was used to determine occupational safety practices and workplace risk awareness of industrial workers. The research was carried out on employees who

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were in industrial settings where they could be exposed to machinery and physical hazards, chemicals and other work risk factors. The data were measured at one time to characterize existing safety-related behavior and perceptions. It was believed to be an appropriate design as it made it possible to conduct systematic evaluation of the worker characteristics, safety awareness, workplace practices, and other organizational factors in the selected industrial population.

2.2 Study Population and Sample

The population of the study was industrial workers who were involved in working and production activities. The end analysis involved 80 respondents. The respondents were chosen based on various age groups, work experience and education levels to provide diversity in the study sample. Active workers who volunteered to take part were taken into consideration, and the non-complete responses were left out of analysis. The chosen sample was enough to make descriptive statistics, use chi-square, and correlation analysis and perform simple linear regression.

2.3 Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was created based on the objectives of the study and used to collect the data. The tool had 30 questions, separated into two large sections. The initial section contained five demographic and work-related questions that dealt with age, gender, education level, work experience, and official safety training. The second section had 25 Likert-scaled statements that were grouped according to the risk awareness at the workplace, PPE and safety behaviors, safety training and emergency preparedness, safety compliance and hazard reporting, and organizational support of safety dimensions.

2.4 Measurement and Scoring

The answers to the 25 attitudinal statements were assessed on a five point Likert scale (strongly disagree/strongly agree). Scores 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 were used respectively. The overall occupational safety-practice measure and the individual safety dimensions were used as the mean scores. To enable categorical interpretation, the mean scores 1.00- 2.33 were considered as low, 2.34-3.66 were considered as moderate, and 3.67-5.00 were

considered as high. Risk awareness and safety-practice levels were summarized using this scoring technique.

2.5 Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaire was given to the sampled industrial workers with the purpose of the study explained and instructions were given to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire requested the participants to give demographic details and rate their agreement with the different statements on workplace safety. Checking of completeness of forms before data entry was done. Coding was in the form of numbers and responses were arranged in a tabular spreadsheet. A unique identification number was given to each of the respondents and the Likert-scale responses were logged into the predetermined numerical coding system to be subjected to statistical analysis later.

2.6 Statistical Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data collected. Demographic characteristics and categorical safety levels were determined by frequencies and percentages, whereas mean and SD were applied to the scores on the continuous scale. The relationship between the level of occupational safety-practice and the formal safety training was analyzed using Chi-square analysis. The relationship between the workplace risk awareness and safety practices was evaluated by correlation. Regression was then used to find out the predictive value of risk awareness on occupational safety practices. The level of statistical significance was $p < 0.05$.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Demographic and Occupational Characteristics of Respondents

A total of 80 industrial workers were included in the study. The highest percentages were 2635 years and 3645 years with 35.0 and 35.0 percent respectively of the participants in the age groups respectively. The majority of the respondents were men (68.8%). In terms of work experience, 36.2% had an industrial experience of 1-5 years and 22.5% had 6-10 years. Sixty-six-point two percent of the respondents had undergone occupational safety training formally, as compared to 33.8 percent who had not undergone formal

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workplace safety training (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic and occupational characteristics of respondents (N = 80)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	18–25 years	7	8.8
	26–35 years	28	35.0
	36–45 years	28	35.0
	46–55 years	12	15.0
	Above 55 years	5	6.2
Gender	Male	55	68.8
	Female	25	31.2

Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents based on work experience and formal occupational safety training status.

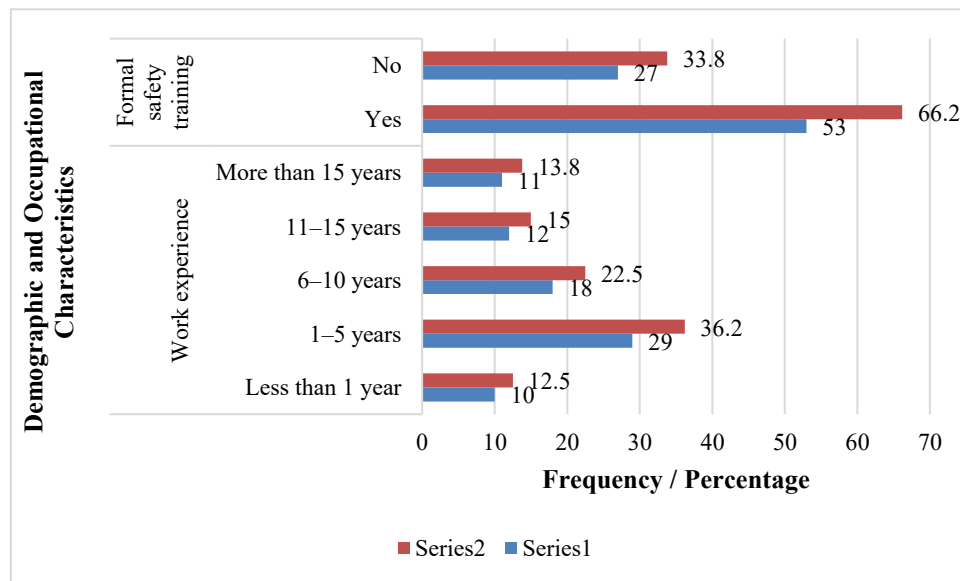


Figure 1. Occupational Characteristics of Respondents

The distribution is an indication of the variation in the industrial work experience and the involvement in formal safety training. The trend reflects that the respondents were selected to reflect various degrees of workplace exposure, and safety training attendance was widespread, which was helpful in contextualizing occupational safety behavior and awareness of occupational

risks.

3.2 Association Between Formal Safety Training and Occupational Safety Practices

The chi-square test showed that there was a statistically significant relationship between formal occupational safety training and level of occupational safety-practice. Of respondents who

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had formal training on occupational safety, 71.7 percent reported a high level of occupational safety practices, as opposed to 40.7 percent of workers that had not undergone formal training. Untrained workers were more likely to practice moderate safety practices. The correlation

between safety training and improved occupational safety behavior in industrial workers was statistically significant, $\chi^2(1) = 5.98$, $p = 0.014$, meaning that there was a statistically significant relationship between safety training and improved occupational safety behavior (Table 2).

Table 2. Chi-square association between formal safety training and occupational safety-practice level

Safety Training	Moderate n (%)	High n (%)	Total n (%)	χ^2	df	p-value
Yes	15 (28.3)	38 (71.7)	53 (66.2)	5.98	1	0.014*
No	16 (59.3)	11 (40.7)	27 (33.8)	5.98	1	0.014*
Total	31 (38.8)	49 (61.3)	80 (100.0)	5.98	1	0.014*

Statistically significant at $p < 0.05$.

3.3 Levels of Workplace Risk Awareness and Occupational Safety Practices

Categorical assessment showed that 60.0% of the respondents were highly risk-aware at the workplace, whereas 40.0% had an average degree of risk awareness. The same trend was also noted in occupational safety practices where 61.3% of the industrial workers were classified with high

safety-practice levels and 38.8% with moderate levels. There were no low respondents on either measure. These results show that there is overall positive awareness and safety behavior of the industrial workers who were part of the study.

Figure 2 shows the distribution of the respondents based on their level of risk awareness and level of occupational safety practice.

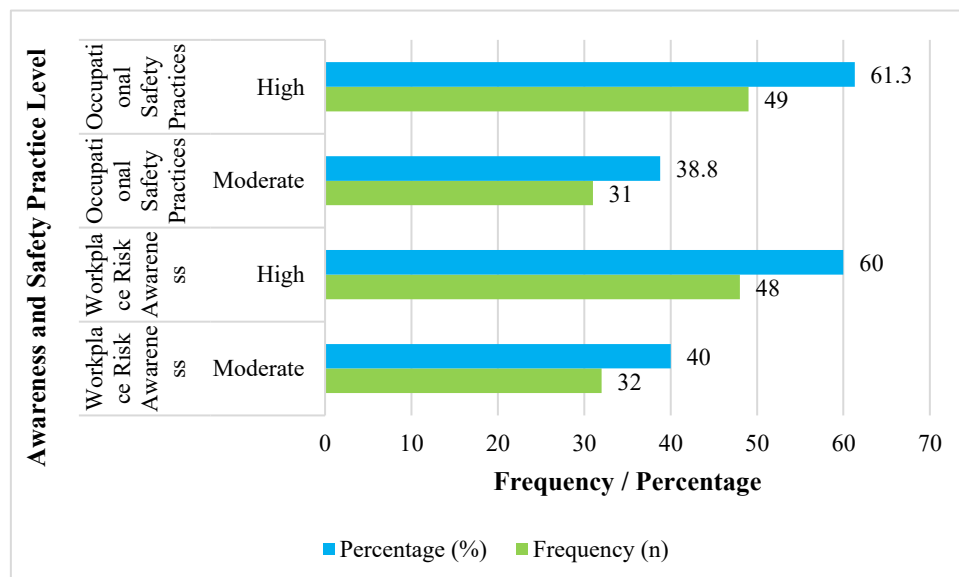


Figure 2. Awareness and Safety Practice Levels

The distribution indicates that the respondents tended to exercise good risk awareness and occupational safety in the workplace. The majority

of the participants fell under the higher levels category whereas the proportion of individuals with moderate levels of safety orientation was

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lower which shows a positive safety orientation among the industrial workers being examined.

3.4 Correlation Between Workplace Risk Awareness and Occupational Safety Practices

The correlation analysis revealed the positive correlation between the significant occupational safety dimensions. There was a positive correlation between work place risk awareness

and PPE and safety practices ($r = 0.534$) and safety compliance and reporting hazards ($r = 0.543$). Connection between risk awareness in the workplace and the general occupational safety practices was more significant, as the $r = 0.598$. There was also consistency in occupational safety practices, where the overall occupational safety practices were strongly positively correlated with PPE and safety practices and safety compliance (Table 3).

Table 3. Correlation matrix of workplace risk awareness and occupational safety dimensions

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Workplace Risk Awareness	1.000	0.534*	0.543*	0.598*
2. PPE and Safety Practices	0.534*	1.000	0.412*	0.821*
3. Safety Compliance and Hazard Reporting	0.543*	0.412*	1.000	0.851*
4. Overall Occupational Safety Practices	0.598*	0.821*	0.851*	1.000

*Note: $N = 80$. $p < 0.05$.

3.5 Workplace Risk Awareness and Occupational Safety Dimensions

The respondents were found to have generally positive perceptions in the key occupational safety dimensions. The mean score of the risk awareness related to the workplace was the highest at 3.84 ± 0.52 , then the safety compliance and hazard reporting was 3.79 ± 0.56 . The general

occupational safety-practice score was $3.77SD0.50$. The mean score of safety training and emergency preparedness was moderate (3.61 ± 0.64), and the mean score of organizational safety support was the lowest (3.48 ± 0.71).

Figure 3 compares the mean scores and variability of the key dimensions of workplace safety and risk awareness.

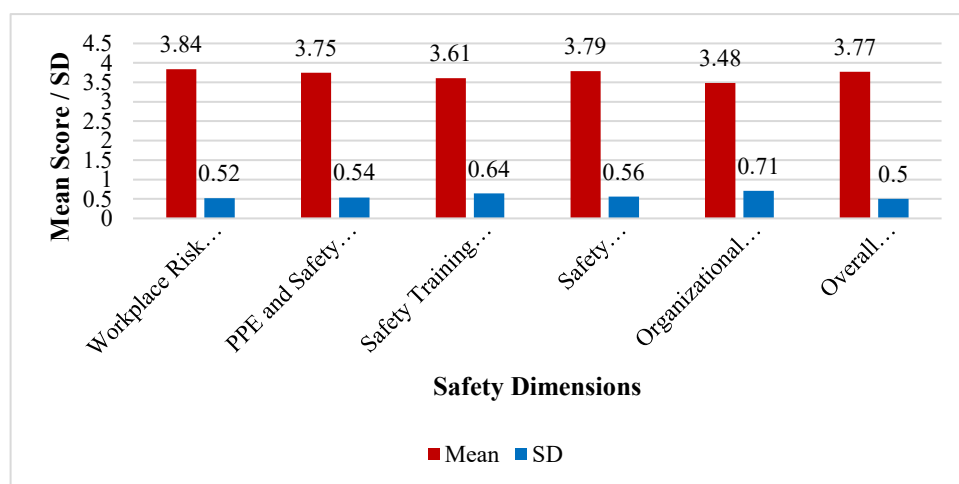


Figure 3. Mean Scores of Safety Dimensions

The trend shows that the overall ratings in the workplace safety dimensions are mostly positive,

with better scores in risk awareness, safety compliance, and general practices. The fact that

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the organizational support and training-related dimensions are lower in comparison is an indicator of the opportunities in which more workplace safety initiatives can be useful.

3.6 Predictive Effect of Workplace Risk Awareness on Occupational Safety Practices

Regression revealed that occupational safety practices among industrial workers were strongly

predicted by the risk awareness held in the workplace. The statistical significance of the overall model was $F(1,78) = 43.47$, $p < 0.001$ and 35.8% of the variance in occupational safety-practice scores was explained, $R^2 = 0.358$ and adjusted $R^2 = 0.350$. The relationship between risk awareness and work safety practices was found to be significantly positive with $B = 0.576$, $SE = 0.087$, $t = 6.59$, $p < 0.001$ (Table 4).

Table 4. Regression predicting occupational safety practices from workplace risk awareness

Predictor	B	SE	Standardized β	t-value	p-value	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
Constant	1.554	0.339	0.000	4.59	<0.001*	0.880	2.229
Workplace Risk Awareness	0.576	0.087	0.598	6.59	<0.001*	0.402	0.750

Model statistics: $R = 0.598$; $R^2 = 0.358$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.350$; $F(1,78) = 43.47$; $p < 0.001$.

4. DISCUSSION

The current research indicated that there were an overall positive occupational risk awareness and work habits of industrial workers. The greatest overall mean was the risk awareness in the workplace, with safety compliance and hazard reporting also being high. On the contrary, there were relatively weaker support of organizational safety and safety training and emergency preparedness. This trend indicates that employees can be reasonably aware of occupational risks and can demonstrate safe working behavior, yet there might be aspects of the systems within organizations that promote such behaviors that should be enhanced. The same evidence has highlighted that individual safety practices are more effective in supporting occupational safety in case they are based on integrated organizational risk-management systems (Ramos et al., 2020). One of the key results of the research was that the majority of the respondents were rated highly on both workplace risk awareness and practice of occupational safety. This means that a large number of workers could identify hazards at workplace and then translate this knowledge into safer work behaviour. Past studies have also revealed that well-organized risk evaluation may enhance safety performance by enhancing hazard

identification and preventive behavior in hazardous working conditions (Sanni-Anibire et al., 2020). The lower score on the aspect of organizational support, however, indicates that the awareness of the workers at the organizational level might not be enough to ensure safe practices unless the management offers them with adequate PPE, supervision, communication, and safety resources.

Occupational safety-practice level was significantly related to formal safety training. The workers that had completed the safety training exhibited higher scores on safety-practice than workers that had not received the safety training. This justifies the need to train regularly to develop hazard awareness, safe work practice, and emergency readiness. The result also shows that workplace safety programs cannot be considered as one time compliance exercises but as processes of continuous learning. Expansive occupational health systems have also highlighted the necessity to incorporate worker safety, health, and well-being in organizational planning and future work systems (Tamers et al., 2020). Correlation analysis indicated that there were a moderate-strong positive relationships between occupational safety practices and risk awareness at the workplace. This implies that better informed

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workers regarding hazards were more inclined to adhere to protective measures, wear PPE, obey safety guidelines, and report unsafe situations. Similar studies have shown that the perception of risk can affect safety behavior via worker motivation and the safety climate that is present in the work environment established by supervisors and fellow employees (Xia et al., 2020). The current results thus support the need to augment the capacity of workers to discern and react to workplace hazards as a way of enhancing behavioral safety.

The regression analysis also indicated that workplace risk awareness was a significant predictor of occupational safety practices and it was also able to explain a significant amount of variance in safety behavior. This implies that risk awareness is not only descriptive but it can have a significant role to play in the way workers respond to hazardous conditions. Nonetheless, there was still a high percentage of safety-practice disparity that, could not be explained, which implies that, other elements that could play a role in worker conduct are leadership, safety culture, workload, supervision, and availability of resources. Occupational safety culture studies have also demonstrated that organizational norms, reporting systems and management practices also affect the consistency of safety performance (Tetzlaff et al., 2021). These results have some practical implications to industrial management. The formal training of safety, regular hazard communications, supervisor oversight, the availability of PPEs, and near-miss reporting systems should be reinforced. This can also be facilitated with the help of emerging technologies like automated monitoring, hazard detection, and decision support, but these tools are to be used in addition to the worker-centered safety systems instead of replacing them (Shah and Mishra, 2024). A more comprehensive systems perspective that integrates working conditions, behaviors of workers, organizational culture and well-being can be more sustainable in terms of occupational safety (Sorensen et al., 2021).

The research was limited in a number of ways. The sample was also quite limited, cross-sectional design failed to provide causality, and self-reported responses could have resulted in social desirability bias. Future research needs to involve more diverse and larger industrial groupings,

longitudinal designs, observing safety practices first hand, and other organizational variables. It is also recommended that future studies look into whether repeated training, greater safety culture and better management support can deliver measurable long-term effects on the safety behavior of workers.

5. CONCLUSION

The current research needed to conclude that industrial workers had an overall positive workplace risk awareness and occupational safety practices. The majority of the respondents expressed a great awareness of the hazards at the workplace and had a positive safety behavior, especially concerning the use of PPE, compliance with safety guidelines, and reporting hazards. Nevertheless, the relatively low scores of organizational safety support and safety training and emergency preparedness were the indicators that the systems at the workplace could be enhanced even more. Formal occupational safety training was strongly correlated with higher safety-practice levels, indicating that formal training can help towards safer worker behavior. Risk awareness at the workplace was also positively related to occupational safety practices and regression analysis confirmed that increased risk awareness was a significant predictor of safety performance. These results emphasize the significance of individual awareness and solid organizational support. Regular safety training, better access to PPE, enhanced supervisor surveillance, and more frequent reporting of hazardous situations and near misses should thus be maintained in industrial workplaces. Occupational risk reduction should also be focused on the clear communication of safety procedures and management commitment. The results are to be approached with caution since the study was cross-sectional and relied on self-reported answers of a small sample. The future studies must consider bigger and more heterogeneous industrial populations and must consider longitudinal evaluation and direct monitoring of safety conduct to gain more insight into alterations with time and provide more proof of safety intervention in the workplace.

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