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**THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY
AND HEALTH (OFFICE ERGONOMICS) ON
EMPLOYEES PRODUCTIVITY**

ZAINUROL FAZLI BIN ZAINUDIN

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UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

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**Thesis submitted to the College of Business,
Universiti Utara Malaysia
in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Master of Human Resource Management (MHRM)**

2010

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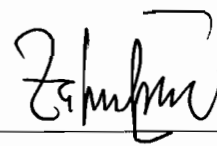
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Master of Human Resource Management

Universiti Utara Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study is about the impact of Organizational Safety and Health on employee's productivity. The objective of this study was to look into the practices of Safety and Health Procedures and Regulations in the UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang. This study also attempt to determine some important of organizational safety and health issues in the organizations surveyed and to look into employees' level of understanding on Organizational Safety and Health Administration Act.

This study was limited to Administrative Support Staff working in Administrative Department of the three universities and this study focused only on office ergonomics. A questionnaire was developed and distributed for the purpose of data collection. 67 percent of response rate was obtained from the 100 questionnaires that were distributed to respondents.

The researchers found that more than half of the respondents were made aware of OSHA practiced by their employers which is 80.6% (54) and knows about Organizational Safety and Health (OSHA) procedures and regulations practiced by their employers. The researchers also found that mostly half of them did not do anything to address their discomfort of health problems that they experienced during their daily work activities. However, the level of understanding about OSHA practices in the three organizations is good or very good.

As a general conclusion, the level of awareness on Organizational Safety and Health (OSHA) among employees in UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang is good or very good because more that half which is equivalent to 80.5% (54) of the respondents aware about what is OSHA

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Nowadays, organizations are more concerned about safety and health issues at the workplace. Since 1970, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have been helping employers and employees in reducing the number of occupational safety and health hazards at workplace (Soediono & Kleiner, 2002).

The Occupational Safety and Health Act were clearly designed to protect the health and safety of employees. (Bohlander & Snell, 2004). It is also the most comprehensive legislation regulating the safety and health of workers in Malaysia. There are many health hazards issues occurring at workplace involving chemical hazard, indoor air quality, cumulative trauma disorders, video displays terminals, ergonomics and Aids. This study is carried out to study the impact of organizational safety and health on employee's productivity.

This study is focused on ergonomics issues at the workplace in particular the office. Ergonomics is the science of fitting jobs to people. (Te-Hsin Pao & Kleiner, 2001). Essentially, ergonomics is the relationship between the worker and the job and focuses on the design of work areas to enhance job performance (Loy & Greer, 2005). Failure to address ergonomics issues will result in repetitive stress injuries, with carpal tunnel syndrome being the most common type (Mondy, Noe, & Premeaux, 2002).

If ergonomics issues are not taken seriously at the workplace, it will contribute to low productivity among workers and increase the costs of medical due to employee's bad health. With proper ergonomics design, it can improve product quality, increase production rates, raise employees' morale and thus reduce absenteeism and turnover rates and reduces workers' compensation claims (Te-Hsin Pao & Kleiner, 2001).

This study will be conducted on administration support staff, namely clerks employed in Higher Learning Institutions at University Technology MARA, Shah Alam, University Pertanian Malaysia, Serdang and University Perguruan Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim, Perak. The study will focus on ergonomics and impact to the staff that working in particular the office. From the study, the result will show whether the ergonomics can give the impact on the productivity to the staff.

1.2 Problem Statement

There are many causes of accidents and injuries in the workplace. Employers that do not enforce safety and health standards throughout the organizations may lead to serious health problems among employees (Cordier, 2005). When employees are not protected on their job, their productivity in the organization will be affected (Smith, 2002). Therefore, this study is to look at the impact of the organizational safety and health on employee's productivity.

The study is focused only on ergonomics issues at the workplace, in particular the office. Ergonomics is an attempt to make fit the machine and work environment to the person, rather than require the person to make the adjustment. A new survey by the Institute for Health and Productivity Management (IHPM) shows that musculoskeletal and mental health conditions have the greatest reported negative impact on employees' productivity. The survey found that, health and diseases issues diminish performance and lost of productivity (Smith, 2002). Poor ergonomic conditions in industry not only hinder productivity but also affect safety and health of workers and the quality of work and products. (Shikdar & Sawaqed, 2003)

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. Do UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang practice Safety and Health Procedures and Regulations in their offices?
2. What are the Organizational Safety and Health issues found in the organizations surveyed?
3. What is the level of understanding of Organizational Safety and Health among employees in UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang?

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to look into:

1. To evaluate the practices of Safety and Health Procedures and Regulations in the UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang.
2. To determine some important Organizational Safety and Health issues in the organizations surveyed.
3. To determine the Employees' level of understanding on Organizational Safety and Health Administration Act.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will contribute to the some parties that involved in the workplace. The finding also will look the realation between the effect of ergonomic to the parties in the working area. All parties like employees, employer and organizations, The Ministry of Human Resource, manufacturers and supplier of office equipment are significant to the study.

1.5.1 Employees

This study helps the employees to get a better understanding of OSHA and its practices in the organization. Besides, it also will increase the employee's awareness about the importance of OSHA at the workplace. Each employee shall comply with Organizational Safety and Heath standards and all rules, regulations, and orders issued pursuant to the OSHA act which are applicable to his or her own actions and conduct. By practicing of OSHA, employees can reduce the accidents and injuries at

the workplace. Therefore, the employees can increase their productivity and performance.

1.5.2 Employers and Organizations

This study can also help employers to ensure the safety, health and welfare of their employees by providing or maintaining the equipment and systems of work that are safe and without risks to health. It can also help them to have early intervention programs to increase the awareness of OSHA.

This study can also help organizations to take initiatives to conduct training on OSHA. Training sessions can help employers implement the OSHA at their organization by involving employees to actively participate in the training process.

1.5.3 Ministry of Human Resource

This study can also contribute to the Ministry of Human Resources on organizational safety and health regarding ergonomics issues in order to prevent accidents and improve the health of employees in all types of organizations.

1.5.4 Manufacturers and Suppliers of Office Equipment

This study can be used as a reference by manufacturers and suppliers of office equipment to ensure the products are safe and not a risk to health when properly used. They will ensure to provide customers with clear information about the safe use of their products and make available information about research and testing.

1.5.5 Body of Knowledge

This study can contribute to the body of knowledge to readers for better understanding on OSHA and therefore improve the quality of health and safety among the employees in the organization.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

Several limitations have been identified for this study. The limitations of this study were:

This study focused on the study of ergonomics only. It is because an ergonomics issue is very critical nowadays in working environment. Other than that, ergonomics also is one of major cases that contributed to workplace accident. Thus, the study will focus only in the ergonomics.

This study was conducted only at UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang. The particular universities has been chosen because no research and study on ergonomics having in the university.

This study focused only on administration support staff, namely the clerical staff. It is because this level of staff is always having a problem with the ergonomics issues. Compared than other level such as upper level or executive level, they are rare to get the problem of ergonomics in their office. It is because of the burden of work and status in the organization and also their job scope are different.

1.7 Definition of Terms

It is important to define the important terms in this study. This study is carried out to study the impact of organizational safety and health on employees' productivity. The important terms in this study are safety, health, administration, administration support staff and ergonomics. The explanations of those terms are stated as follows:

Safety

According to Oxford Dictionary, *safety* means the state of being safe and ability to keep or make safe (Advanced Learners Dictionary). Based in Introducing Human Resource Management book, safety is defined as absence from danger and avoidance of injury (Foot & Hook 2002). In Human Resource Management Book, health refers to employees' freedom from physical or emotional illness (Mondy, Noe & Premeaux, 2002). According to this definition, we should expect employers to do everything in order to keep employees away from danger and avoid injury while at workplace.

Health

Health is the state of being well and free from illness in body or mind (Advanced Learners Dictionary). Health is defined as being physically, mentally well with body, and mind in excellent working order (Foot & Hook, 2002).

Administration support staffs

Administration is the management of public or business activities (Advanced Learners Dictionary). In the context of this study, *administration support staff* is referred to position of clerks who are working at UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang.

Ergonomics

Ergonomics is the study of human interaction with tasks, equipment, tools, and the physical work environment (Mondy, Noe & Premeaux, 2002). It is an interdisciplinary approach to designing equipment and system that can be easily and efficiently used by human beings (Bohlander & Snell, 2004).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature issues on organizational safety and health specifically on the issue of ergonomics. The study proposed to know the impact of organizational safety and health on employee productivity in learning institution at UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang.

2.2 Background of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)

The United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) were created by Congress under the Occupational Safety and Health Act, signed by President Richard M. Nixon, on December 29, 1970. The mission is to prevent work-related injuries, illnesses, and deaths by issuing and enforcing rules (called standards) for workplace safety and health

2.3 The Importance of OSHA

According to a speech by Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn in the “Seminar Ke Arah Kecemerlangan Keselamatan dan Kesihatan Pekerjaan di Era 2000”, both employers and employees should start practicing health and safety procedures at workplace in order to be more productive (Smith, 2002). His concern is probably based a report

from PERKESO in the year 1999, the number of accidents increased from 85338 in 1998 to 92074 cases in 1999.

A new survey by the Institute for Health and Productivity Management (IHPM) shows that musculoskeletal and mental health conditions have the greatest reported negative impact on employee's productivity. Despite this, many employers are reluctant to sponsor disease management programs to reduce costs (Smith, 2002). The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) continue to regulate employers by specifying workplace safety and health requirements in great detail. Numerous OSHA workplace safety and health regulations significantly restrict the manner in which employers may operate. In addition, OSHA continues to vigorously enforce workplace regulations through a complicated and comprehensive program of workplace inspections.

Under the OSHA Act, OSHA was created to encourage employees to reduce workplace hazards and to implement new or improve existing safety and health standards. OSHA Act also provides for research in occupational safety and health and develops innovative ways of dealing with occupational safety and health problems, establish "separate but dependent responsibilities and rights" for employers and employees for the achievement of better safety and health conditions, maintain a reporting and recordkeeping system to monitor-job related injuries and illnesses, establish training programs to increase the number and competence of occupational safety and health personnel and develop mandatory job safety and health standards and enforce them effectively

2.4 Definition of Ergonomics

According to (Jeffress 2003), ergonomics is the science of fitting the job to the worker and best defined as a good business because good ergonomics is good economics. It is about working smarter and safer. The word ergonomics was coined to name the field of study that integrates knowledge derived from the human sciences to match jobs, systems, products and environments to the physical and mental abilities and limitations of people (Bohlander & Snell, 2004).

Occupational health and safety is one of the most important topics of ergonomics (Zink, 2005). Ergonomics identifies and controls risk factors that cause musculoskeletal disorders such as low back pain, carpal tunnel syndrome and tendonitis (Soediono, Mahalia & Kliener, 2002). According to (Vanste 2003), ergonomics is basically the study of making people more comfortable, more efficient and safer in their work and home environment.

2.5 Benefits of Ergonomics

Some benefits of ergonomics have been identified for this study. The practices of ergonomics can improve safety and health in workplace, improved employee morale and job satisfaction, improved productivity, improved quality of work, improved competitiveness in the marketplace, reduced probability of accidents and errors, reduced absenteeism and employee turnover and reduce medical and workers compensation cost associated with cumulative trauma disorders (Bohlander & Snell, 2004). According to (Maimunah Aminudin 2010), ergonomics can help prevent injuries and limit secondary injuries as well as accommodate individuals with

various disabilities, including those with musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs). This is supported by a report from the University of Maryland. The report stated that repetitive motion illnesses or cumulative trauma disorder represents half of all occupational illness reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (Bohlander & Snell, 2004).. According to (Vanstee 2003), ergonomics can change work environment, can boost productivity and even make employee feel better.

Ergonomics attempt to minimize the harmful effects of carelessness, negligence, and other human fallibilities that otherwise may cause production defects, damage to equipment, or even the injury or death of employees. Ergonomics contributes to improvement in productivity, improves morale and positive return on investment (ROI). For example, company like Compaq Computer and 3M prove that company achieve cost effective at organization (Bohlander & Snell, 2004).

2.6 The Consequences of Not and Lack Concern on Ergonomics

According to (Maimunah Aminudin 2001), Malaysia reportedly has one of the highest rates of industrial accidents at the workplace. The consequences of accidents at work are financial costs, losses of output, lowered morale and negative publicity. The ScienceDirect Journal stated that, poor ergonomics conditions in industry not only hinder productivity but also affect health and safety of workers and the quality of work and products (Shikdar and Sawaqed, 2003). Wherever there is an accident at work, the employer has to pay medical bills for injured employees. A report from the University of Maryland stated that, though cost estimates vary greatly, it is believed that medical and workers compensation costs caused by ergonomics disorders

including Cumulative Trauma Disorders (CTS), various tendon disorders and lower back injuries that estimated to exceed US100 billion annually (Bohlander & Snell, 2004). Another report that supports this claim is from the U.S Department of Labor. The report stated that more than one-third of all serious occupational injuries and illnesses stem overexertion or repetition. These cases occurs more than 600,000 each year. These injuries cost businesses between US15 to US20 billion annually in workers compensation costs alone. Add indirect costs, and the total amounts as high as US60 billion (Jeffress, 1999). As a result of an accident, production will be suspended and loss of output from workers being absent on medical leave and machinery being repaired.

Not only do employers have to pay high compensation costs, occupational injuries and illnesses also affect employees' morale and motivation. Staffs who are demotivated and dissatisfied will seek employment in another organization where it is safer to work in (Maimunah Aminudin, 2001).

As with many other ergonomics approaches, such activities are often necessary because of legal requirements. In addition, most of the ergonomics problem occurs in the workplace especially in the administration works. Carpal tunnel syndrome is one of the related injuries results from ergonomics problem. National Center for Health Statistics reported that carpal tunnel syndrome results in the highest number of days lost among all work related injuries. Almost half of the carpal tunnel cases result in 31 days or more of work loss (Maimunah Aminudin, 2001).

In a book titled Administrative Office Management written by (Quible 2000) informs the evidence of the failure to consider the office environment may be noticed

in several ways. An unsatisfactory environment often results in decreased levels of productivity and employees morale. Absenteeism and tardiness are apt to increase, as the number of errors made by employees. In extreme cases, the employees' physical well being may be jeopardized.

This is supported by Datuk Abdul Rahman Bakar in his speech in the "Majlis Pelancaran dan Menandatangani Memorandum Persefahaman Niosh Petronas Safety Passport (Npsp)" in Kerteh, that said accidents and incidents have an impact on companies' reputation and can lowered employees' morale (Maimunah Aminudin, 2001).

In the year 1992, ergonomics disorders reported for 56 percent of illnesses. In same year, the Bureau of Labor Statistic recorded 280,000 cases out of one million injuries were CTD's (cumulative trauma disorders) of the upper extremities, wrists, shoulders and elbows (Jeffress, 1999). Research is ongoing to discover whether the use of VDT (Visual Display Terminal) or computer monitor is affecting on workers' health. Findings suggest that constant use of the computer leased to increase of miscarriage and suppression of the immune system, a factor to cancer. VDT users commonly report eyestrain, physical discomfort in the neck and shoulder areas, and high levels of stress. To prevent negative effect on health, United States National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health recommends the use of removable keyboard, adjustable screen, brightness control, comfortable, adjustable chair, rest periods of 15 minutes after 2 hours of use and safe distances between user and VDT.

2.7 Strategies to Improve Ergonomics

Several strategies have been recommended to improve ergonomics (Shikdar & Sawaqed, 2003). There are:

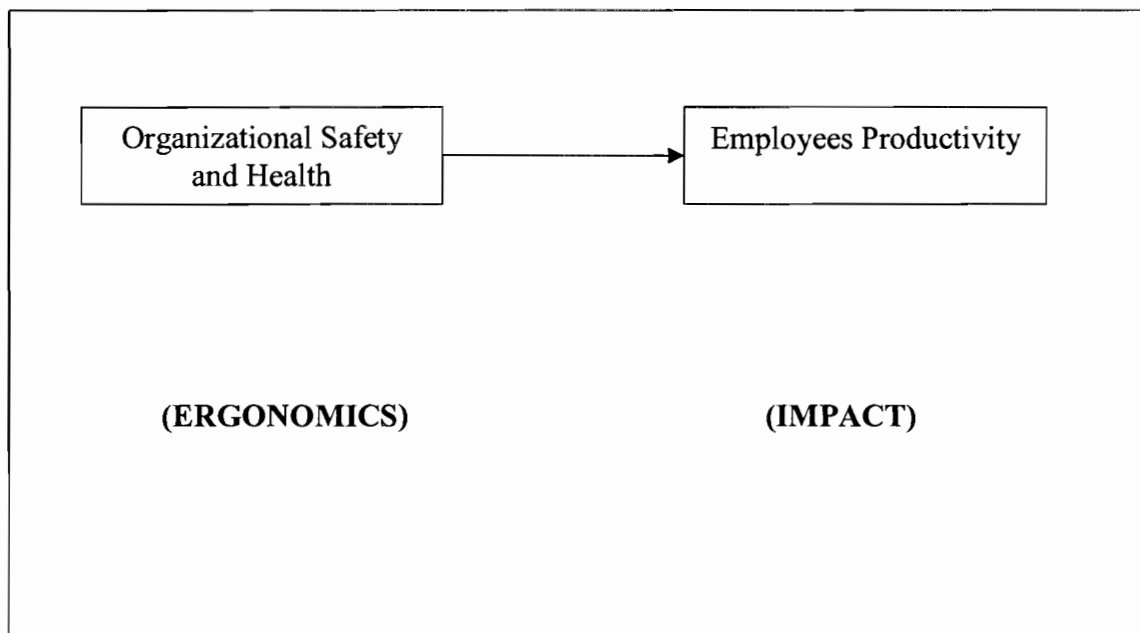
Management must be knowledgeable and aware of the benefits of ergonomics and the prevention of injuries through ergonomic design of work systems. Information on ergonomics should be made available to industries. Management have to play their role in protect the employees in the issues of ergonomic in workplace. They have to prepare the good equipment and good working environment to their employees to work in the organization.

Employees need to be trained systematically in ergonomics in order to improve not only productivity but also occupational health and safety. This would be beneficial to both employees and management. When the employees are trained systematically it will reduce the numbers of accident in workplace and injuries to the employees.

The workplace and work design should be carried out using ergonomics guidelines, acts and recommendations considering the user population. The environment must be given adequate consideration. Before the company starts their operation, they have to consider of the safety and ergonomic condition to the employees.

Strategies should be formulated and implemented in order to introduce ergonomics systematically through ergonomic programs in industry to improve worker productivity, safety and health environment.

Figure 2.1: Relational Scheme



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discussed and explained the methodology of the research. It includes research design, sampling frame, population, sampling technique, sample size, unit of analysis, data collection procedures, survey instrument, validity of instrument and plan for data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

In the context of this study, the research design used is descriptive research. Descriptive research describes the characteristics of an existing phenomenon (Sekaran, 2003). Descriptive research design is a scientific method which involves observing and describing the behavior of a subject without influencing it in any way. Descriptive research is often used as a pre-cursor to quantitative research designs, the general overview giving some valuable pointers as to what variables are worth testing quantitatively.

3.2 Sampling Frame

Sampling frame is the actual set of units from which a sample has been drawn, in the case of a simple random sample; all units from the sampling frame have an equal chance to be drawn and to occur in the sample. In the ideal case, the sampling frame should coincide with the population of interest.

The sampling frames of Administrative Support Staff working in the selected Higher Learning Institutions were obtained from the Administration Department of each of the university. The selected Higher Learning Institutions were UiTM Shah Alam, UPM Serdang and UPSI, Tanjung Malim, Perak.

3.3 Population

The population for this study was the Administrative Support Staff employed at UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang. These Administrative Support Staff worked in Administration Department of the three universities. The total number of the Administrative Support Staff were employed in the three universities was 100 employees that worked in the Administration Department. Of these 100 employees, 40 employees were from the Administration Department, UPSI; 30 employees from the Administration Department, UiTM; and 30 employees from the Administration Department, UPM.

3.4 Sampling Technique

No sampling technique was used in this study as all Administrative Support Staff in the Administration Department of the three selected universities were included in this study.

3.5 Sample Size

All 100 Administrative Support Staff employed at Administration Department in the three universities were used as samples.

3.6 Unit of Analysis

The unit analysis for this study was the Administrative Support Staff who worked in the Administration Department at UPSI Tanjung Malim Perak, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

Data was collected by using questionnaires. Some of the questionnaires were distributed and collected by hand and some were distributed by post. The respondents were given two week to complete the questionnaires. Follow up calls were made to the non responding respondents to remind them to complete and return the questionnaires to ensure timely respond and high rate of return. (Refer to Table 3.1)

Table 3.1: Data Collection Procedures

Descriptions	Universities			Actions Taken
	UPSI	UiTM	UPM	
Questionnaire Distribution	20/08/10	21/08/10	21/08/10	Questionnaires were distributed personally.
Questionnaire Collection	29/08/10	30/08/10	30/08/10	Questionnaires were collected personally.
Follow up call	25/08/10	25/08/10	25/08/10	Placed phone calls to remind respondents about the questionnaires.

3.8 Instrument

The instrument used for this study was questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A of the questionnaire gathered the demographic information of respondents. Section B focused on whether the organizations practiced the safety and health procedures and regulations and section C focused on the organizational safety and health issues found in the organizations surveyed. The questionnaire consisted of closed and open ended questions. The number of closed ended questions exceeded the number of open ended question for ease of interpretation and analysis of data.

3.9 Plan for Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 12.0. Data was analyzed to show the frequency of each of the responses in the questionnaire. Table 3.2 shows a summary of statistical tests used to analyzed data.

Table 3.2: Statistical Test Used to Analyzed Data

Research Questions	Scale of Measurement	Question Number in Questionnaires	Statistical Test
RQ1: Do UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam, UPM Serdang practice Safety and Health Procedures and Regulations in their offices?	Nominal	6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (Section B)	Frequency and Percentage
RQ2: What are the Organizational Safety and Health issues found in the organizations surveyed?	Nominal	13 – 20 (Section C)	Frequency and Percentage
RQ3: What is the level of understanding on Organizational Safety and Health among employees in UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang?	Nominal	7 (Section B)	Frequency and Percentage

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter reports and discusses the findings based on information obtained from 67 respondents surveyed with a response 67%. As mentioned earlier, there were three specific research objectives to be achieved in this study, which were to determine the practices of Organizational Safety and Health Administration practiced by organizations surveyed; to determine some important Organizational Safety and Health issues in these organizations; and to determine employee's level of understanding on Organizational Safety and Health Administration Act. This study was limited to Administrative Support Staff working in Administrative Department of the three universities and this study focused only on office ergonomics.

4.1 Respond rate

Questionnaires were distributed to all Administrative Support staff employed at Administrative Department at UiTM Shah Alam, UPSI Tanjung Malim and UPM Serdang (N=100). From the 100 questionnaires distributed, 67 questionnaires were returned (67% return rate).

4.2 Section A

Demographic information

Demographic section requested the respondents to provide information on their gender, age, highest qualification, current position and department. The following tables will explain the details demographic profile of respondents.

Table 4.1: Organization of Respondents

Name of Organization	(N)	Percentage (%)
UPSI	40	59.7
UPM	15	22.4
UiTM	12	17.9
TOTAL	67	100

Table 4.5 shows the organization of respondents. There were 40 respondents from the Universiti Perguruan Sultan Idris, Tanjung Malim (59.75%), 15 respondents from the Universiti Putra Malaysia (22.4%) and 12 respondents from Universiti Teknologi MARA (17.9%).

Table 4.2: Gender of Respondents

Gender	(N)	Percentage (%)
Male	27	40.3
Female	40	59.7
TOTAL	67	100

Table 4.6 shows that there were 40.3% male respondents and 59.7% female respondents.

Table 4.3: Age of Respondents

Age	(N)	Percentage (%)
20 – 25	22	32.8
26 – 30	22	32.8
31 – 35	9	13.4
36 – 40	7	10.4
Above 40	7	10.4
TOTAL	67	100

Table 4.7 shows the age of respondents. More than half of the respondents (65.6%) were aged 30 years and below. 10.4% of the respondents were aged above 40 years.

Table 4.4: Qualification of Respondents

Qualification	(N)	Percentage (%)
SPM/STPM	37	55.2
Certificate	7	10.4
Diploma	9	13.4
Degree	8	11.9
Others	6	9.0
TOTAL	67	100

Table 4.8 shows the highest qualification of respondents. Qualifications included SPM/STPM, certificate, diploma, degree and other qualifications. 37 respondents (55.2%) had SPM/STPM, 7 respondents (10.4%) had certificates, 9 respondents (13.4%) had diploma, 8 respondents (11.9%) had degree and 6 respondents (9.0%) had other qualifications.

4.3 Section B

Research Question 1: Do UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang practice Safety and Health Procedures and Regulations in their offices?

Section B of the questionnaire sought information on the practices of safety and health procedures and regulation in the organizations surveyed. Respondents were asked to answer whether they were aware of Organization Safety and Health Regulations practiced by their organizations. The respondents responded either 'yes' or 'no'.

Table 4.5: Awareness on OSHA among Respondents

Organization	Awareness			
	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
UPSI (N=40)	33	82.5	7	17.5
UPM (N=15)	13	86.7	2	13.3
UiTM (N=67)	8	66.7	4	33.3
TOTAL (N=67)	54	80.6	13	19.4

Table 4.1 shows 80.6% of all respondents in the universities surveyed were made aware of OSHA practiced by their employees. Of the 54 respondents surveyed were made aware of OSHA the highest percentage of respondents came from UPM (86.7%) where 13 out of the 15 respondents reported their awareness. We were to look at UiTM only 8 out of the 12 respondents (66.7%) were made aware of OSHA and 4 of the respondents were not aware of OSHA practiced by their employer (33.3%).

Table 4.6: Understanding of OSHA among Respondents

Organization	Level of Understanding		
	Good - Very good (%)	Average (%)	Poor – Very Poor (%)
UPSI (N=40)	13 (32.5)	21 (52.5)	6 (15)
UPM (N=15)	7 (46.7)	5 (33.3)	3 (20)
UiTM (N=12)	9 (75)	2 (16.7)	1 (8.3)
TOTAL	29 (43.3)	28 (41.8)	10 (14.9)

Table 4.9 shows the level of understanding on Organizational Safety and Health Regulations among respondents. Less than half of the respondents (43.3%) rated the level of understanding on OSHA as either “good” or “very good” of these respondents the lowest percentage come from UPSI where only 32.5% of the respondents reported their level of understanding on OSHA as either “good” or “very good” and 52.5% (N=21) rated their level of understanding as “average”.

Table 4.9 also shows that 41.8% of all respondents rated their level of understanding on OSHA as “average” and another 14.9% had rated their level of understanding as either “poor” or “very poor”.

Slightly more than half of the respondents (55.2%) were in the opinion that OSHA practices do not affect work productivity.

When respondents were asked if they were provided with a copy of OSHA Act manual by their employers during orientation program 52 respondents (77.6%) reported they were not provided with these documents.

This would therefore support the finding on respond the respondents’ level of understanding on OSHA.

Table 4.7: Employers’ Emphasis on Office Ergonomics

Organization	Emphasis on Office Ergonomics			
	Yes	Percentage (%)	No	Percentage (%)
UPSI (N=40)	16	40.0	24	60.0
UPM (N=15)	3	20.0	12	80.0
UiTM (N=12)	1	8.3	11	91.7
TOTAL (N=67)	20	29.9	47	70.1

Respondents were further asked if their organizations put emphasis on office ergonomics at the workplace. 60.1% of the respondents reported that their employers did not put emphasis on office ergonomics. The highest percentage of these respondents came from UiTM (91.7) followed by UPM (80%) whereas only 40% of the respondents from UPSI reported that their employer put emphasis on office ergonomics. (Refer to Table 4.2)

Of the 67 respondents surveyed, 43 respondents (64.2%) thought that their organizations workplace design and office layout did not facilitate movement of employees from one area to another. 18 of the respondents (26.9%) reported that aisles and corridors at the workplace were obstructed by equipment and furniture.

Only 15 of the respondents (22.4%) were in the opinion that their organizations provided adequate provisions for lighting, décor, air-conditioning, humidity and noise control at the workplace. Only 5 respondents (7.5%) of the respondents reported to be given a guide sheet of office ergonomics at the workplace and only 16 respondents (23.9%) reported that their employee answered that office machine and equipment were kept in good working order.

54 of the respondents (80.6%) reported that they were not provided with break time apart from lunch break at the workplace. Only 1 respondent (1.5%) reported that his/her organization provided a physical therapist at the workplace.

When respondents were asked if there were procedures used by employees to report pain or other signs and symptoms related to ergonomics injuries or illness, 59 respondents (88.1%) reported that there were no such procedures. Of the 8 respondents (11.9%) who reported that there were procedures reported used by employees were to go to the clinic (2 respondents) and provided with first aid (1 respondent).

4.4 Section C

Research Question 2: What are the Organizational Safety and Health issues found in the organizations surveyed?

Table 4.8: Health Problems Experienced by Respondents

	No. of respondents who experienced Health Problems
Yes	25 (37.3%)
No	42 (62.7%)
Total	67 (100%)

Table 4.3 above shows the number of respondents who experienced health problems during daily work activities. Of the 67 respondents surveyed, 25 respondents (37.3%) had experienced health problems related to work activities.

Respondents were asked to indicate steps they had taken when experienced any discomfort or health problems at the workplace. Responses given by respondents were 'to notify supervisor' (N=8), 'consult health services' (N=9), and 'provide

suggestions' (N=8). 14 of the 25 respondents (56%) reported that they did not do anything to address their discomfort or health problems caused by work activities.

When respondents were further asked if the steps they had taken to overcome their discomfort and health problems caused by work activities improved the situation, 14 respondents (56%) reported that their situations had improved. These 14 respondents were out of the 25 respondents who experienced health problems related to work activities. (Table 4.3)

When respondents were asked if they were satisfied with the OSHA practices implemented at their workplace, 58.2% (N=39) of the respondents were satisfied and 41.8% (N=28) reported not to be satisfied. 1 respondent suggested that the practices needed to be improved. 3 respondents reported that OSHA practices were not communicated to all the employees in the organization and another 11 respondents reported that OSHA was not fully implemented at their workplace.

Table 4.9: Consequences of Stress

Consequences of Stress	(N)	Percent (%) (N=67)
Heart Disease	1	1.5
Ulcers	2	3.0
Blood Pressure	2	3.0
Headache	15	22.4
Neck/Back/Shoulder Pain	16	23.9
Sleep Disturbance	9	13.4
Work Injury	4	6.0
Job Dissatisfaction	7	10.4
Depression	9	13.4
Exhaustion	8	11.9
Moodiness	14	20.9
Burnout	7	10.4
Lower Job Performance	16	23.9
Accidents	2	3.0
Faulty Decisions	5	7.5
Absenteeism	6	9.0

Respondents were asked if they had experienced any of the above of stress caused by office ergonomics. Table 4.4 shows respondents responses on the consequences of stress. Respondents could have responded to more than one response. Quite a number of respondents experienced neck/back/shoulder pain caused by stress (23.9%), lower job performance (23.9%), headache (22.4%) and moodiness (20.9%).

Table 4.10: Affect of OSHA

Affect of OSHA	Unsure (%)	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
OSHA will protect employees from injuries and illness.	32 (47.8%)	5 (7.5%)	19 (28.4%)	11 (16.4%)
Employees will feel safe and secure with the implementation of OSHA.	32 (47.8%)	5 (7.5%)	16 (23.9%)	14 (20.9%)
With OSHA, employees are made aware of their rights at the workplace.	32 (47.8%)	4 (6.0%)	17 (25.4%)	14 (20.9%)
It is the responsibility of employer to introduce OSHA at the workplace.	31 (46.3%)	1 (1.5%)	4 (6.0%)	16 (23.9%)

Table 4.10 above shows respondents' perceptions on Organizational Safety and Health practices at the workplace. As can be seen from table 4.10 nearly half of the respondents were unsure if the practice of OSHA will protect them from injuries and illness from work activities (47.8%), that they will feel safe and secure with the implementation of OSHA (47.8%), with the implementation of OSHA employees are made aware of their rights at the workplace (47.8%), or whether it is the responsibility of the employers to introduce OSHA at the workplace (46.3%). This data would also support the earlier finding on the respondent's level of understanding on OSHA.

Respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the practice of OSHA will protect employee from injuries and illness from work activities. (44.8%) employee feel safe and secure with the implementation of OSHA (44.8%), with the implementation of OSHA employee will be made aware of their rights at the workplace (46.3%), and that it is the responsibility of the employers to introduce OSHA at the workplace (46.3%).

Table 4.11: List of Suggestions by Respondents

Suggestions	(N)	Percent (%)
Employer should more responsible.	1	1.5
Employees should have a copy of OSHA procedures.	1	1.5
Inform employees on the importance of OSHA.	2	3.0
Create employees awareness.	1	1.5
Make as compulsory practices.	3	4.5
Competition between departments.	1	1.5
Be sensitive to working environment.	1	1.5

When respondents were asked to provide suggestions on how their employees could further improve OSHA practices at the workplace, only 10 respondents (14.9%) provided suggestions as listed in Table 4.11.

4.5 Summary

In summary, it was found that more than half of the respondents were made aware of OSHA practiced by their employers which is 80.6% (54). The findings also showed that 64.2% (43) of the respondents thought that their organizations workplace design and office layout did not facilitate movement of employees from one area to another. 88.1% (59) of the respondents reported that there were no such procedures used by employees to report their discomfort experienced. The findings also showed that only 37.3% (25) respondents had experienced health problems related to work activities. The researchers found that 58.2% (39) of the respondents said that they satisfied with the OSHA practices implemented at their workplace. It also was found that more than half of the respondents were female which 59.7%. More than half of the respondents (65.6%) were aged 30 years and below. It indicated that more than half of the respondents (55.2%) were SPM/STPM qualifications. 41.8% of the respondents reported that their level of understanding on OSHA was good or very good and a number of them rated their level of understanding as either “poor” or “very poor” is probably because 70.1% of the respondents indicated that their organizations not emphasize office ergonomics at the workplace and also not provided with a copy of OSHA Act manual by their managers during orientation program.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introductions

This chapter provides a conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of this study. The purpose of this study was to identify the awareness of OSHA especially on ergonomics issues among employees in UPSI, UiTM and UPM.

This study focused on Administrative Support Staff at Administration office in the three universities only.

Research question 1: Do UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang practise Safety and Health procedures and regulations in their offices?

It can be concluded that, from all the three organizations, more than half of the respondents which is equivalent to 80.6% (54) said that they were made aware and knows about Organizational Safety and Health (OSHA) procedures and regulations practiced by their employers. It is also can be concluded that from all the three organizations, 70.1% (47) of the respondents reported that their employers did not put emphasis on office ergonomics at the workplace. The highest percentage of these respondents came from UiTM Shah Alam. More than half which is equivalent to 88.1% (59) of the respondents said that they did not have procedures for employees who reported pain or other signs and symptoms related to ergonomic injuries or illness.

Research question 2: What are the Organizational Safety and Health issues found in the organization surveyed?

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the employees have been experienced health problems during their daily work activities but mostly half of them did not do anything to address their discomfort or health problems. Quite a number of the respondents have been experienced neck/back/shoulder pain and lower job performance that caused by stress, lower job performance, headache and moodiness. Slightly more than half of the respondents were satisfied with the OSHA practices implemented at their workplace.

Research question 3: What is the level of understanding of Organizational Safety and Health among employees in UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang?

The findings indicated that the level of understanding about OSHA practices is good or very good. Slightly more than half of the respondents were in the opinion that OSHA practices do not affect work productivity. More than half also the respondents did not provided with a copy of OSHA Act manual by their employers during orientation program. Nearly half of the respondents from the three of the organizations were unsure if the practice of OSHA will protect them from injuries and illness from work activities, they will feel safe and secure with the implementation of OSHA and with OSHA, they are made aware of their rights at the workplace.

5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, there are several recommendations made to improve the knowledge on OSHA and to enhance the implementation of OSHA practices at the organizations in the future. There are two parts of recommendations that have been made. The recommendations are:

Suggestions for organizations:

1. The organizations should make compulsory practices of OSHA especially on ergonomics because it can affect employee's job performance at their workplace.
2. Each organization should create employees awareness about OSHA through seminars and training programs so that employees are more knowledgeable about OSHA.
3. The employers should be more responsible for the need and concern of their employees' safety and health by being more sensitive to the problems of the employees at the workplace and provide a suggestion box for employees to give their suggestions regarding improvements to be made.
4. Each organization should give a copy of OSHA procedures to employees so that they are aware of their safety, wellbeing and rights.

5. Organizations should organize a competition between departments on practicing good ergonomics so that employees will be more motivated and aware about ergonomics. Certificates and recognition can be awarded to the department that wins.
6. The employees should be made more sensitive to working environment that can increase their job performance when working in a good working environment.

Suggestions for future research:

1. This research was conducted on educational organizations. So, it is recommended that in future studies should be carried out on the public sector and government sector to see the comparison between these two sectors on the implementation on OSHA especially on ergonomic issues.
2. The respondents of this study focused on Admin. Assistant only. Therefore, in the future studies, the respondents should be extended to all employees from various departments and level.

5.3 General conclusions

For a general conclusion, the level of awareness on Organizational Safety and Health (OSHA) among employees in UPSI Tanjung Malim, UiTM Shah Alam and UPM Serdang is good or very good because more than half which is equivalent to 80.5% (54) of the respondents are aware about OSHA Act.

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**A SURVEY TO INVESTIGATE THE IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL
SAFETY AND HEALTH (OFFICE ERGONOMICS) ON EMPLOYEES
PRODUCTIVITY**

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please tick (✓) the appropriate response.

1. Gender

☐

Male

☐

Female

2. Age

☐

20-25 years

☐

36-40 years

☐

26-30 years

☐

Above 40 years

☐

31-35 years

3. Highest qualification

☐

SPM/STPM

☐

Diploma

☐

Certificate

☐

Degree

☐

Others, please specify: _____

4. Current position: _____

5. Department

☐

Administration

☐

Finance

☐

Human Resource

☐

Purchasing

☐

Public Relation

☐

Others, please specify:

<p>SECTION B: THE PRACTICE OF SAFETY AND HEALTH PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS IN THE ORGANIZATION</p>

6. Has your employer made you aware of Organizational Safety and Health in your employment?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. What is your level of understanding about Organizational Safety and Health Act?

☐ Very good ☐ Poor
☐ Good ☐ Very Poor
☐ Average

8. Do you have a copy of Organizational Safety and Health Act Manual and orientation programs for occupational safety provided by your employer?

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Does your organization practise Safety and Health Procedures and Regulations?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If your response is "No", please proceed to Question 12.

10. If your response is "Yes", how does your employer practise Safety and Health at the workplace? (You may tick more than one response).

- ☐ Put emphasis on office ergonomics that helps ensure that the employees' tasks, tools and equipment, and physical environment closely match their individual needs.
- ☐ The design and layout of the office facilitate the movement of employees from one area to another.
- ☐ Aisles and corridors are not obstructed by equipment or furniture.
- ☐ Adequate provisions are made for lighting, décor, air-conditioning, humidity control, and noise control.
- ☐ Employers provide Office Ergonomics Guide Sheet (For example, a diagram of an ergonomic workstation for a computer user).

☐ Allow employees to have a flexible break time within working hours.

☐ Provide a physical therapist that specializes in office ergonomics.

☐ Office machine and equipment are kept in good working order. Equipment using hand-fed process such as electric staplers and paper cutter should be guarded and staff trained in their proper use.

☐ Others, please specify:

11. Does your employer have procedures for employees who report pain or other signs and symptoms related to ergonomic injuries or illnesses?

☐ Yes

☐ No

12. If your response is "Yes", what are the procedures used by your employer?

SECTION C: ORGANIZATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ISSUES FOUND IN THE ORGANIZATION

13. Have you ever experienced any health problems during your daily work activities?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If your response is "No", please proceed to Question 18.

14. Please tick (✓) your response if you have experienced any discomfort during daily work. (You may tick more than one response).

☐

Notified Supervisor

☐

Met with Health Services

☐

Give suggestions on how to improve
the situation in the suggestion box

☐

Did nothing

☐

Others, please specify:

15. Did the situation improved after action(s) has/have been taken?

☐

Yes

☐

No

16. Organizational/physical environment is a work-related stressors that causes employees to experience stress. Tick (✓) the following consequences of stress if you are experiencing it/them. (You may tick more than one response).

Physiological

- ☐ Heart disease
- ☐ Ulcers
- ☐ High blood pressure
- ☐ Headaches
- ☐ Neck/back/shoulder pain
- ☐ Sleep disturbances
- ☐ Work injury
- ☐ Others, please specify

Behavioral

- ☐ Lower job performance
- ☐ More accidents on the job
- ☐ Faulty decisions
- ☐ Higher absenteeism
- ☐ Workplace aggression
- ☐ Others, please specify

Psychological

- ☐ Job dissatisfaction
- ☐ Depression
- ☐ Exhaustion
- ☐ Moodiness
- ☐ Burnout
- ☐ Others, please specify

17. Using the following scale, please circle the most appropriate answer.

Strongly Agree - 5
 Agree - 4
 Disagree - 3
 Strongly Disagree - 2
 Unsure - 1

The practice of OSHA will protect employees from injuries and illnesses	5	4	3	2	1
Implementation of OSHA in the organization will make employees feel safe	5	4	3	2	1
Explanation of OSHA to employees will make them know about their rights	5	4	3	2	1
Implementation of OSHA in organization shows that employers are responsible towards employee's safety and health in the organization.	5	4	3	2	1

18. Do you think that Organizational Safety and Health practices affect your work productivity?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If your response is "Yes", how? _____

19. In general, are you satisfied with the Organizational Safety and Health practices implemented at your workplace?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If your response is "NO", please state why.

20. What would be your suggestions to improve OSHA practices at your workplace?

1.

2.

3.

4.

- END OF QUESTIONS-