

FACTORS THAT UNDERMINE COMPLIANCE WITH OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY STANDARDS IN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

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Abstract: Ensuring adequate compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines in business enterprises is a key duty of the South African Department of Employment and Labour and the City of Tshwane. A survey was conducted in the City of Tshwane to explore the extent to which business enterprises comply with occupational health and safety guidelines by gathering qualitative and quantitative information on a list of 24 indicators of compliance in the greater Tshwane geographical region. The study was based on a survey of 406 formally registered businesses selected from all economic sectors. The 24 indicators are commonly used by the World Health Organisation (2021), the United Nations Development Programme (2021) and the International Labour Organisation (2021) for measuring the degree of compliance of business enterprises with occupational health and safety guidelines and regulations.

The result of the survey revealed that about 53% of businesses adhered to occupational health and safety requirements adequately, whereas about 47% of businesses failed to comply with occupational health and safety requirements adequately. The most influential predictors of compliance were ownership of the business being operated, the financial capacity of businesses being operated, and the extent to which business owners and operators were aware of and educated about the importance of compliance with occupational health and safety regulations by health inspectors whose job is to monitor businesses operating in Tshwane.

Keywords: Tshwane, Business enterprises, Occupational health and safety, Adherence

Introduction and background to study

The main purpose of research was to explore the extent of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements that are applicable to formally registered business enterprises in the Greater Tshwane geographical region in South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa (2020), about 3.2 million people live in the Greater Tshwane geographical region. The South African National Department of Employment and Labour (2021) and the City of Tshwane (2021) collaborate on the task of ensuring satisfactory compliance with occupational health and safety standards that are applicable to formally registered business enterprises in the Greater Tshwane geographical region. Both institutions are committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goal on occupational safety and health. This is stated as Target number 3.9 in which it is stated that all parties are committed to ensuring full compliance with occupational health and safety requirements by the year 2030. The other key role-players in ensuring satisfactory compliance with occupational health and safety requirements are the South African National Department of Environmental Affairs (2021) and the South African National Department of Health (2021).

De Jongh, Ferreira, Dickason-Koekemoer and Sunde (2020) have shown that South Africa has about 510, 000 formally registered businesses although the actual percentage of informal businesses is not known. Compliance with occupational health and safety related requirements is inadequate (Amoah and Mlenzana, 2021) by the standards of ILO and WHO. The authors have shown the need to enhance the current level of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in South African business enterprises. According to the authors, the need for promoting awareness is significant especially in newly established business enterprises.

The key benefits of compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines and requirements are many. Examples are ensuring personal hygiene, cleanliness, neatness, the proper collection, disposal and management of municipal waste, ensuring the health of employees, minimising occupational and work-related hazard and risk to employees at the workplace, respecting the rights of customers and consumers, ensuring job satisfaction and

ensuring productivity and motivation among employees. Complying with occupational health and safety enables whole communities to respect and abide by environmental and sanitation rules, the basic and human rights of workers, and promote corporate social responsibility.

Compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines is highly valuable for ensuring productivity and job satisfaction among employees in business enterprises. The study conducted by Cool and Ockendon (2015) has shown that it is the duty of elected governments and municipalities to promote awareness about the need for ensuring adequate compliance with occupational health and safety requirements and guidelines. The authors have shown the need to inspect businesses on a regular basis as a means of ensuring adequate compliance with occupational health and safety related issues Adeleke, Akinlabi, Jen and Dunmade (2021) have shown that failure to comply with occupational health and safety related requirements results in failure in the long-term. Such failures are related to loss of employee morale, loss of productivity, loss of customer loyalty, and loss of prestige in local communities.

The main purpose of study was to assess the level of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in 406 business enterprises in Tshwane. South Africa is a signatory to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) of the year 2030 in areas that are related to meeting targets that are related to occupational health and safety in business enterprises. Adeodu, Kanakana-Katumba and Rendani (2021) have shown that lack of efficiency in the delivery of municipal services undermines the quality of service delivery and the degree of satisfactory compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in business enterprises. The quality of maternal and child health services depends upon the degree of commitment shown by political leaders for ensuring the provision of satisfactory health services to mothers and children. Inefficiency in the provision of healthcare services causes life-threatening complications of pregnancy, disability, maternal death, maternal morbidity, child death, child morbidity (World Health Organisation, 2021). According to the World Health Organisation (2021), half a million women die in pregnancy during childbirth due to puerperium with more than 99% of these deaths occurring in developing countries. The report shows that about 492,000 stillbirths and perinatal deaths are recorded annually in developing nations due to poor primary health care service delivery.

Occupational health and safety programmes should be monitored and evaluated strictly by health inspectors. Very few studies have been conducted in Tshwane to assess the extent to which business enterprises comply with occupational health and safety requirements. There is a need for assessing the degree of adherence of business enterprises on a regular basis. Occupational health and safety surveys are critically needed in business enterprises in Tshwane in order to protect the rights of employees and customers. Such programmes are also important for protecting the rights and health of consumers who rely on business enterprises. With this in mind, occupational health and safety education should be promoted in business enterprises by designated occupational health and safety inspectors.

Babae Tirkolae, Mahdavi, Seyyed Esfahani and Weber (2020) have shown that promoting awareness about occupational health and safety in business enterprises is highly valuable for ensuring efficiency in the management of municipal solid waste in densely populated urban areas. The authors have shown that awareness education is essential before enforcing municipal bylaws. The study has assessed the level of awareness among businesses about the importance of complying with occupational health and safety guidelines in business enterprises. Results of this study are useful for promoting primary health care services and for ensuring environmental health and sanitation. They are also useful for ensuring satisfactory compliance with municipal bylaws on proper waste management in business enterprises. It is highly important for businesses to comply with occupational health and safety guidelines on a day-to-day basis. The study is useful for developing guidelines and for identifying key indicators of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements and guidelines that are applicable to business enterprises operating in Tshwane.

Literature review

Luttenberger (2020) has shown that one key obstacle of ensuring a good quality of life in urban centres in developing nations is enforcing regulations and guidelines on occupational health and safety in all business enterprises operating in city centres. The arduous task of cleaning up municipal waste generated by business enterprises operating in city centres poses a huge challenge to all developing nations such as South Africa. This is because of unemployment, poverty, waste scavengers and business enterprises who cannot be registered as formal

businesses due to inability to pay tax money. Failure to register business enterprises operating in city centres results in failure to enforce municipal bylaws and collect tax money that is owed to local municipalities.

Mukonza and Swarts (2020) have shown that ensuring environmental cleanliness and sanitation in city centres is a key indicator of efficiency in municipal service delivery. The study conducted by the author's shows that it is essential for local municipalities to promote awareness about health and environmental sanitation by working in partnership with national and provincial health Departments. Nyashanu, Simbanegavi and Gibson (2020) have shown the need for support from local municipalities to emerging business enterprises in terms of remaining profitable. The authors have shown that most emerging businesses in Tshwane have been hurt significantly due to Covid-19 lockdowns and restrictions. In order for business enterprises to comply with occupational health and safety requirements, local municipalities must show their commitment to support them by promoting awareness education about occupational health and safety regulations and potential benefits.

Palmer, Moodley and Parnell (2017) have shown that the degree to which businesses comply with corporate social responsibility guidelines depends upon the extent to which they are actively supported by local municipalities and the quality of municipal service delivery that is provided to them. Kanhai, Fobil, Nartey, Spadaro and Mudu (2021) have shown that the task of ensuring compliance between occupational health and safety guidelines and regulations is closely associated with the efficiency with which urban municipal solid waste is managed by local municipalities. The authors have shown that it is highly valuable to provide incentives to business enterprises that comply with municipal bylaws and occupational health and safety guidelines. The authors have also shown the benefits of monitoring and evaluating efficiency on a regular basis in all urban areas.

Liu, Zhang and Wang (2021) have shown that ensuring compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines is highly beneficial for maintaining profitability and efficient waste management in business enterprises. The authors have shown that efficient municipal solid waste management is closely linked with awareness about the benefits of environmental health and sanitation as well as occupational health and safety. The study has shown that employees are highly motivated to remain loyal to employers who respect their occupational and health safety.

Zhu, Zhang, Luo, Chong, Li and Kong (2021) have shown that providing incentives to small and resource-constrained businesses is helpful for promoting awareness about the potential benefits of occupational health and safety guidelines. The authors have recommended incentives such as training and mentorship programmes of assistance. Based on a study conducted in Gauteng Province, Worku, Snyman and Muchie (2014) have shown that good leadership at all municipal levels is a key requirement for ensuring compliance with municipal bylaws. The management of municipal solid waste generated by businesses operating in the city of shown that the right set of programmes should be used for the promotion of awareness about occupational health and safety issues. According to the author, the first step should be to provide free education and awareness programmes by using community-based programmes. The second step should be the assessment of operational needs. Strategy development in the framework of waste management.

Zorpas (2020) has shown that purpose-specific, country-specific, integrated and cost effective programmes must be used for promoting compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines in business enterprises. As such, the City of Tshwane must conduct a comprehensive study in order to identify suitable programmes of intervention.

Objective of study

The overall aim of the survey was to explore the extent of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in formally registered business enterprises in the Greater Tshwane geographical region in South Africa.

Materials and methods of research

The research was based on a cross-sectional and exploratory research design. The research was based on data gathered from 406 formally registered business enterprises in Tshwane. The study was carried out by administering a self-administered questionnaire of study. Frequency counts, percentages of attributes, probability values from Pearson's chi-squared tests of associations and regression estimates (Afifi, May, Donatello and Clark, 2019) were obtained from data analyses.

Results of data analyses

The result of the survey revealed that about 53% of businesses adhered to occupational health and safety requirements adequately, whereas about 47% of businesses failed to comply with occupational health and safety requirements adequately. Table 1 show estimates obtained from Pearson’s crosstab tests of associations. The table shows that the top 3 influential predictors of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in business enterprises were ownership of the business being operated, the financial capacity of businesses being operated, and the extent to which business owners and operators were aware of occupational health and safety regulations.

Table 1: List of 9 significant two-by-two associations (n=406)

List of 9 factors significantly associated with the compliance of businesses with occupational health and safety (OHS) guidelines	Observed chi-square value	P-value
Type of ownership of business enterprise	74.3045	0.0000
Current capital of business enterprise	68.3760	0.0000
Awareness about occupational health and safety (OHS) guidelines	53.5400	0.0000
Monthly profit of business enterprise	52.8931	0.0000
Economic sector of business enterprise	52.6896	0.0000
Race category of business operator	40.8015	0.0000
Gender of business operator	38.8704	0.0000
Age category of business operator	28.9455	0.0000
Duration of business operation	32.4495	0.0000

Ordered probit regression analysis (Washington, Karlaftis, Mannering and Anastasopoulos, 2020) was performed in order to identify influential predictors of compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines in business enterprises. Table 2 shows regression coefficients and probability values obtained for 3 key predictors of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in business enterprises. The table shows that the top 3 influential predictors of compliance with occupational health and safety requirements in business enterprises were ownership of the business being operated, the financial capacity of businesses being operated, and the extent to which business owners and operators were aware of occupational health and safety regulations.

Table 2: Estimates from ordered probit regression (n=406)

List of 3 influential predictors of compliance with occupational health and safety (OHS) guidelines in business enterprises	Observed chi-square value	P-value	95% Confidence Interval

Type of ownership of business enterprise	6.39	0.0000	(5.14, 7.64)
Current capital of business enterprise	5.88	0.0000	(4.63, 7.13)
Awareness about occupational health and safety (OHS) guidelines	4.61	0.0000	(3.36, 5.86)

Table 2 shows that the level of compliance of business enterprises with occupational health and safety guidelines is significantly influenced by 3 predictor variables. These 3 predictor variables were the type of ownership of business enterprises, the amount of current capital businesses have for conducting business operation, and the level of awareness of businesses about occupational health and safety guidelines.

Discussion of results of study

The study has found that the level of compliance of business enterprises in Tshwane with occupational health and safety guidelines is equal to 53%. This figure is fairly low. It follows that the City of Tshwane and the Department of Employment and Labour have a duty to enhance the current level of awareness about occupational health and safety guidelines and requirements in business enterprises operating in the various regions of Tshwane by using appropriate means and incentives. The study used a matrix of 24 indicators of compliance for assessing the level of compliance with occupational health and safety guidelines. These 24 indicators are commonly used by the World Health Organisation (2021), the United Nations Development Programme (2021) and the International Labour Organisation (2021) for measuring the degree of compliance of business enterprises with occupational health and safety guidelines and regulations.

The study has shown that 47% of businesses do not comply with occupational health and safety requirements adequately in Tshwane. The study has also shown that the most influential predictors of compliance were ownership of the business being operated, the financial capacity of businesses being operated, and the extent to which business owners and operators were aware of and educated about the importance of compliance with occupational health and safety regulations by health inspectors whose job is to monitor businesses operating in Tshwane.

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