

Title: The Reality of Occupational Health and Safety in Stone Saws and Quarries in the West Bank

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Abstract

The study has aimed to identify the reality of occupational health and safety in stone saws and quarries in the West Bank, the researcher has used the descriptive method in analyzing the study. A questionnaire consisting of (47) items was designed, divided into five main themes, the first one about application of occupational safety rules, the second one about commitment of management to apply the occupational safety and health rules in the use of stone saws and quarries, the third one about commitment of employees to follow occupational health and safety guidelines, the fourth about the role of official agencies to control and inspect safety and health procedures, the latest one about workers satisfaction with the availability of personal protective equipment's. The degree of honesty and stability of the tool (0.937).

The study community consists of all workers in stone saws and quarries in the West Bank, their number is (20097) workers, the researcher used the stratified random sample method to collect the study data, where the final sample was recovered from the members of the study community (337) respondents, which was considered as a representative sample of the study.

The results of the study found that there is a bad reality for occupational health and safety applied by the managements of stone saws and quarries in the West Bank, with an arithmetic mean of the total degree of about (2.34), with a standard deviation coefficient of about (0.526), and a low degree of estimation. This represented the singularity of the managements of stone saws and quarries in the legislation of occupational health and safety standards. The role of managements is based on randomness, lack of organization, and confusion. The present work environment in the quarries is generally poor as they seldom follow the correct requirements and procedures. It was found that the commitment of individual workers depends on their keenness to protect themselves from the injuries and dangers in the workplace, this is compounded by their general lack of understanding of the basics and benefits of occupational health and safety. This, combined with the absence of the role of government and official agencies to monitor and inspect safety and health procedures in stone saws and quarries, has led to dangerous conditions within the industry.

The results of the study also showed that there are no differences between the responses of the study sample members about the reality of occupational health and safety in stone saws and quarries according to the different demographic variables.

Based upon the findings of the study, the researcher has recommended taking all measures and procedures to raise the level of occupational health and safety in the work environment by providing the necessary tools and personal protective equipment to protect workers, providing alarms, firefighting, and first aid tools in the necessary places, providing a specialized department for health and safety affairs. The professional system consists of qualified and trained staff, hold training courses for employees which clarifies and stresses the importance of occupational health and safety systems and procedures, raise awareness and education about health and safety, and activating the role of management by providing and implementing a program of incentives and rewards for those committed to apply occupational health and safety procedures, while penalizing the non-committed.

The researcher also recommended the workers to ensure the safety of equipment and tools before using and maintaining them, commit to using personal protective equipment, alert management about personal protective equipment malfunction, and follow the safety instructions issued by the management.

The researcher also recommends an increased role by the appropriate government agency in the supervision and controlling the safety and health procedures in stone saws and quarries on the West Bank by establishing special training centers for occupational health and safety under their supervision.