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Abstract

Purpose: World Health Organization (WHO) potentiates the goal of occupational health and safety as protecting employees' mental, bodily, and social health while they are working. Using Toyota Tsusho Corporation as a case study, this study aimed at examining the impact of occupational health and safety measures on employee commitment.

Methodology: The study utilized a quantitative analysis of published data from Toyota Corporation health and safety initiatives report. Descriptive statistics was employed for the data analysis, and the independent sample test was performed to assess the study's hypothesis.

Findings: This study found that management initiative and commitment to health and safety had a positive influence on employee commitment. It was also revealed that health and safety measures had an association with employee commitment and presenteeism level.

Recommendations: The study recommend businesses to adopt healthy lifestyles and encourage employee motivation to lower presenteeism in both high-risk and low-risk environments. Policies on employee safety and provision of appropriate equipment that reduce the frequency of accidents, illnesses, and injuries should be the priority of management.

Keywords: *Occupational health and safety, employee commitment, presenteeism, organizational policies.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Occupational health and safety is the practice of ensuring that employees are healthy and safe at workplace to improve their performance and productivity. According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2022), the goal of occupational health and safety is to protect employees' mental, bodily, and social health while they are working. International Labor Organization (ILO) estimated about 2.3 million work-related diseases or accidents every year, and over 6000 death each day around the globe (World Statistics, 2022). Additionally, the ILO estimated over 340 million occupational accidents and an annual work-related illness of about 160 million (World Statistics, 2022).

The above estimates indicate how relevant it is, to maintain occupational health and safety standards at the workplace as it directly involves employee commitment, satisfaction and productivity. In a presentation by Amponsah-Tawiah and Mensah (2016), the significance of a healthy working environment is being recognized as a broad concept, influencing the quality of life from the individual level to the large impacts on public health at the societal level. Occupational health and safety aim at the working environment of employees to maintain the best mental, physical and social well-being of employees (World Health Organization, 2022). The viability of a business for employers, labour unions, society, and the government has gradually grown to depend on the workplace. The standard of the workplace has an impact on how well employees perform (Yankson, 2012).

Using Toyota Tsusho Corporation as a case study, this study aimed at examining the impact of occupational health and safety measures on employee engagement**.** This study examined how health and safety conditions in an organization may affect employee commitment. The Health and Safety policy of Toyota Tsusho stated in their health and safety report affirms that: "Toyota Tsusho group utilizes the occupational safety and health management system, and Toyota Tsusho group will make efforts to improve and maintain such system to aim at continuously higher level of safety and health" (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

Work-related accidents and illnesses can be quite expensive for both the company and the affected employee. To prevent workplace accidents and illnesses, management and employees should take all reasonable precautions. However, implementing safety measures while failing to provide enough training and information regarding these regulations will not suffice.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

One of the most significant resources that demand competent management is personnel. The entire efficacy and efficiency of an organization will change as a result of successful and competent human resource management. It is essential to remember that accidents are quite expensive for the organization and the afflicted employee. ILO estimated over 340 million occupational accidents and an annual work-related illness of about 160 million (World Statistics, 2022). Toyota Tsusho Corporation is one of the companies that use machines intensively. Machines and the workplace environment, according to Cascio (1996) are the primary causes of safety hazards.

Despite extensive research on workplace health and safety conducted worldwide, very little work has been done on the relationship between employee commitment and workplace health and safety. It is as a result of this gap in the literature that the study seeks to examine

the health and safety conditions and their effect on employee commitment and make a recommendation on the health and safety of employees in the organization.

1.2 Research Aims and Objectives

This study was to explore the potential impact of health and safety measures on the dedication of employees to work. The main objective of the study was to ascertain whether the implementation of health and safety measures in an organization has a direct impact on the level of commitment of employees. The specific objectives of the study were: To understand whether organizations have health and safety measures in place; To determine management commitment to health and safety and its correlation to risk occurrence factors and; To examine the relationship between health and safety measures and employees' commitment to work.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. Do the organization have health and safety measures in place?
2. Does management have commitment to health and safety and its correlation to risk occurrence factors?
3. What is the relationship between health and safety measures and employee commitment to work?

1.3 Research Hypothesis

Null hypothesis (H1): Health and safety measures have no effects on employee commitment.

The alternative (H2): Health and safety measures have effects on employee commitment.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The world health organization (WHO, 2022), explains occupational health as an area of work that "promotes and maintain the highest degree of physical, mental and social well-being of workers in all occupations". International Labour Organization (ILO, 1998), additionally defines Occupational health and safety as the "discipline dealing with the prevention of work-related injuries and diseases as well as the protection and promotion of health of workers." These definitions elaborate on the mental, physical and social scopes of all occupations and measures to protect, prevent and reduces unexpected accidents in the workplace. Consideration and prevention of workplace death, injuries, and illness are important for individual operative and their families, the organization employing them, the community and society at large.

Workplace injuries and illness affect organizational costs both directly and indirectly. Some of the direct cost includes treatment cost for injured workers, injury compensation and insurance cost and many more. The indirect cost may include overtime charges and loss in production. The injured family may endure emotional and financial constraints (Glashower et al., 2017). Occupational health and safety is not a mere concept of maintaining a safe and healthy working environment for employees but it includes social, personal and community well-being (Liu et al., 2019). Occupational health and safety, following Amponsah-Tawiah and Dartey-Baah (2011), captures the emotional, psychological, and physical well-being of employees in terms of how they go about their daily work activities and, as a result, highlights a crucial topic of interest positively affecting the achievement of organizational goals.

Similarly, Cascio (1996) defines health hazards as elements of the workplace that progressively, cumulatively, and frequently permanently worsen an employee's health, such as cancer, poisoning, and respiratory illnesses. In some businesses, undesirable consequences are the main focus of concern. Conversely, the scope of occupational health and safety is broad, and a multidisciplinary approach is necessary. It requires an understanding of engineering, biology, chemistry, ergonomics, and allied fields. Additionally, it requires public health management abilities for effective decision- and communication-making (Tadesse & Admasu, 2006).

One of the key indicators of occupational health is presenteeism. According to Zanon et al. (2021), presenteeism can be seen as, a condition when employees regularly arrive at work with indications or signs of illness. This is a widespread occurrence in many workplaces and can have detrimental effects on businesses. Although the employee is present at work, the productivity is low coupled with the potential to spread illnesses which threaten not only their productivity but also that of the entire company. It may be difficult to assess the economic costs of presenteeism. The economic cost of such losses could be higher than absenteeism.

According to Ogata (2009), cited in Assunção (2014), depression, obesity, arthritis, back pain, neck pain, and anxiety are the health issues that have the biggest impact on productivity. A firm's major direct health-related expenditures are caused by chronic diseases like heart or disease cancer, which necessitate costly treatments and typically hit people later in life. These costs include a health premium that a firm pays to an insurer or, if it is self-insured, the claims paid for the medication and medical treatment (Hemp, 2004). Employees' productivity is impacted by presenteeism when they arrive at work with health issues but feel obligated to stay due to demands from their supervisors or employers.

As a consequence of this, presenteeism negatively impacts not only employees' productivity but also their commitment, interpersonal connections at work, and ability to balance work and life. Additionally, it deteriorates the health of workers, undermines their motivation to work, increases accidents, and lowers productivity (Haque, 2018). Employee commitment happens to be one of the topics that have received attention from many scholars around the world in the organizational behaviour areas, due to its influence on work behaviour such as effective performance, compliance with policies, directives and many more (Sohel, Shanewaz, Raihan, & Tarik, 2020). According to Leka, Sinclair, & Houdmont (2012), Commitment is a force that binds an individual to a target and to a course of action of relevance to that target. The definitions emphasize employees' devotion to organizational practices and culture.

According to some experts, commitment is both a desire to continue with a course of action and a reluctance to change direction, frequently due to a sense of duty to continue with the plan. People are similarly committed to a variety of organizations, including political, religious, family, economic, and educational ones. Meyer and Allen (1991) describes employee commitment in three components; Affective Commitment (AC), Continuance Commitment (CC) and Normative Commitment (NC). The term Affective Commitment describes an employee's identification with, involvement with, and emotional attachment to the organization. A strong emotional commitment means that employees stay on board with the company because they want. Normative Commitment displays a sense of duty to keep working. Employees that exhibit a high level of normative commitment believe they should stay with the company. It is asserted that a person's experiences both before and after joining

the organization have an impact on normative commitment. This implies that contacts within organizations, as well as those with families and society at large, have an impact on how normative commitment within the workplace develops. (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Markovits, Boer & van Dick, 2014).

2.2 Empirical Framework

Work Engagement, Organizational Commitment and Management Commitment

A state of active labour that is marked by intense activity characterized by zeal, enthusiasm, and absorption is known as work engagement. Employees that are energetically involved in their work are motivated and committed to what they do (Beach, 2000) In this regard, employees can increase their duties and emotional connection to their work, as well as put more effort and more time into work, which is beneficial to obtaining good work performance. Employees that are highly engaged at work also have a strong sense of who they are as workers and have high expectations for themselves. Nevertheless, many researchers have demonstrated a beneficial relationship between work engagement and job performance (Lu, Yu & Shan, 2022).

Ehrhardt et al. (2011), suggest that organizational commitment is a degree to which an employee identifies and associates with an organization's mission, goals, and values and is willing to maintain membership. O'Reilly (1989) defined organizational commitment as a person's psychological connection to an organization, such as a sense of job engagement, loyalty, and belief in the organization's principles. According to this viewpoint, organizational commitment includes employees' acceptance of organizational goals and their capacity to exert effort on behalf of the organization (Miller & Lee, 2001). The retention of key employees is critical to the future success of any organization. Organizational performance, customer satisfaction, and a positive work environment are all heavily reliant on the organization's ability to retain the best employees (Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2021).

Organizations with a safety policy, safety concerns in their strategy, assigning funding for cascading, and putting the same into practice are thought to demonstrate management commitments. According to Berhan (2020), there would be fewer risk factors for disease or accidents if organizational safety rules and strategy concerns were correctly applied and practiced. As a result, occupational illnesses and industrial accidents will become less common. Beach (2000), suggest that high-level management is responsible for an organization's safety enhancement, but team members and employees also play a crucial role in achieving the organization's overall objectives.

The performance of health and safety would never be achieved without employee involvement (Yankson, 2012). Activities that uplift workers and have an impact on their attitudes and beliefs ought to be encouraged. This can be determined when management demonstrates a clear and convincing interest in the well-being and safety of employees, which can be accomplished by providing suitable work equipment, job enhancement programs, skill development, and management activities that demonstrate their concern for employees' safety (Gyekye & Salminen, 2007). Michael et al. (2005), agree that organizational commitment, work satisfaction, and performance-related outcomes are all positively correlated with management commitment to safety.

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3.0 METHODOLOGY

Research methodology describes the ways in which one may proceed with the research; a methodical approach to problem-solving (Smith, 2016). For the purpose of this study, quantitative research method was used as predestined by the purpose of this research. Secondary data in the form of published information related to health and safety measures of Toyota Tsusho were extracted and reviewed for the analysis. This research was based on ontology philosophy which is "our assumptions about knowledge and how this is created" (Vance, 2006). Ontology aids researchers in recognizing the degree of certainty they can have about the existence and characteristics of the objects they are studying.

In this study, the existing phenomenon of Toyota Tsusho over their organizational policies for resolving occupational health and safety issues were explored. Notably, this study sort to explore an in-depth current standing of the impact of health and safety measures on employee commitment taking presenteeism and work engagement into perspective. The study was guided by the pragmatism philosophy. This philosophy approaches practical issues and suggests solutions by fusing theory and practice and employing a variety of research techniques as well as methodological combinations. In this study, a factual case study is used and analyzed practically.

The study adopted case study approach. According to Gillham (2001) cited in Leka (2012), the primary goal of a case study is to produce a context and process study that clarifies the topic under investigation. The research employed descriptive analysis of data collected on the health and safety initiative report of Toyota Tsusho Corporation and a regression analysis to test the hypothesis of the study.

4.0 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The study focused on exploring the potential effect of health and safety measures on the commitment of employees to work. The objective of the study was to determine whether the implementation of health and safety policies at the workplace directly influences how committed employees are to their work. The specific objectives of the study were, (a) To understand whether organizations have health and safety measures in place, (b) To determine management commitment to health and safety and its correlation to risk occurrence factors, and (c) To examine the relationship between health and safety measures and employees' commitment to work. Secondary data was collected from Toyota Tsusho Corporation initiatives on health and safety reports. This data was gathered from August 2022 to October 2022 using a descriptive approach providing an in-depth understanding of the phenomena of the study.

The Health and Safety policy of Toyota Tsusho stated in their health and safety report affirms that Toyota Tsusho group top management recognizes that good communication between top management and employees is crucial for safety and health management, and the top management will respect such intercommunication with employees. And as inscribed, Toyota Tsusho group observes the laws of safety and health, guidelines of work operation inside the premises of customers, and Toyota Tsusho group will establish necessary internal rules and regulations to improve the level of safety and health management (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

In the health and safety management framework, Toyota Tsusho reported that up to 399 individuals received safety and health training in the fiscal year 2020, including new hires,

mid-level workers, managers, and executives. A total of 287 people used the workshop simulators for practical instruction to increase sensitivity to danger (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d). The health and safety reports stated the Toyota Tsusho Group Health Declaration which was released by the top management in October 2017, and since then, health management has been encouraged. To ensure that every employee can conduct business activities while being aware of the Key Sustainability Issues. Figure 1 shows the management health and safety framework of Toyota Tsusho group showing the involvement of management and initiatives and measures in improving health and safety.
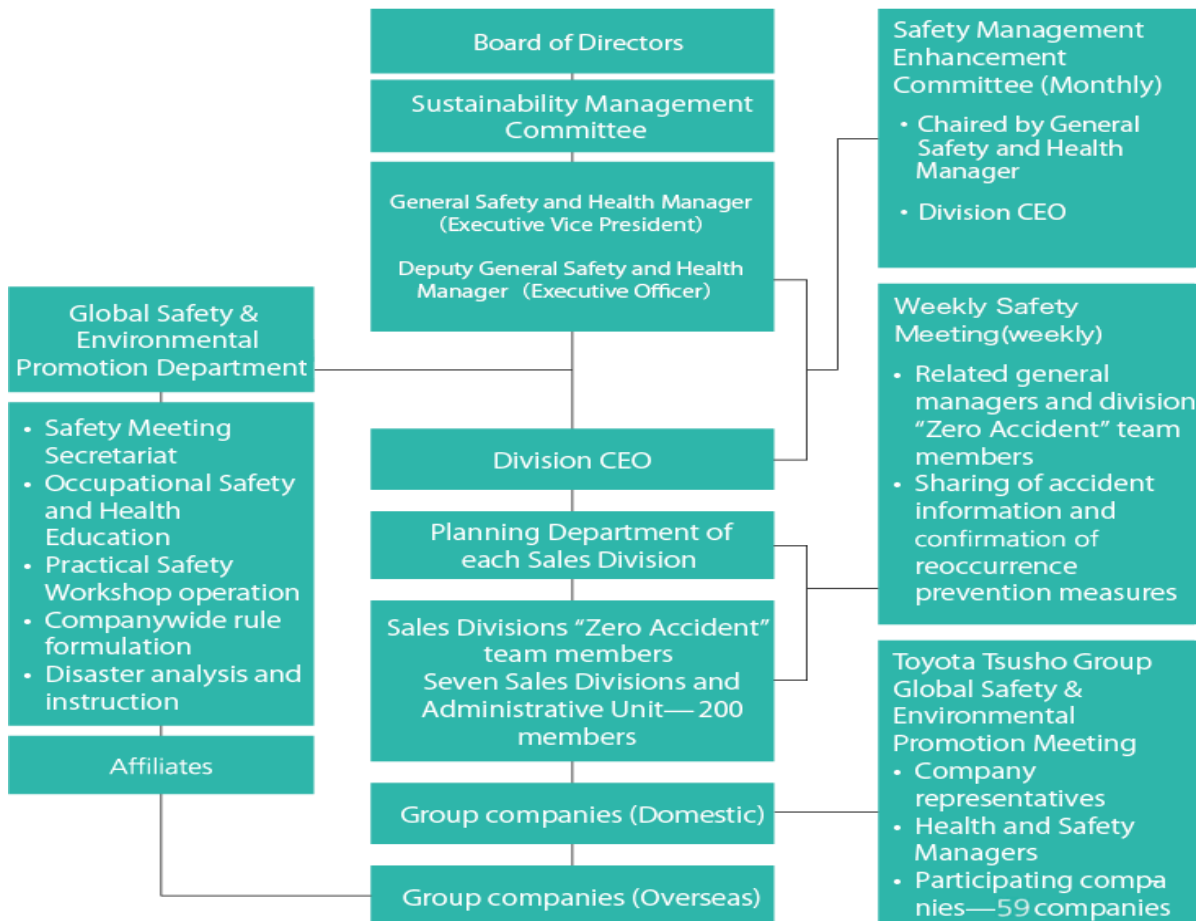

Figure 1: Toyota Tsusho group health and safety management promotion framework

Source: Adopted from (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

In line with the health declaration, the organization made the development of human resources that exemplify 'Be the Right ONE' a management concern and aimed to maintain and improve the physical and mental health of every employee. By encouraging regular health checkups, conducting interviews, putting rules into place, and hosting seminars on cancer, infectious diseases, mental illnesses, and lifestyle-related diseases, the organization is improving employee health literacy. A healthy lifestyle challenge 8 program was introduced by the Toyota group. This initiative promotes advancements in eight areas (appropriate weight, drinking, exercise smoking, snacking, breakfast, sleep and stress). This health management is focused on cancer and infectious disease counter-measures, and as a result of these activities, improves the impact on lifestyle-related diseases and mental health (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d).

Further analysis of the policy of Toyota Tsusho in maintaining continuous higher health and safety levels presented in table 1 shows management commitment to promoting health. There was 100 % periodic medical consultation rate from 2017 to 2021. For the antismoke measure, there was a downward trend in the rate of smoking from 20.8% in 2017 to 17% in 2021. There was an increase in stress rate recorded in 2018 and 2019, however, there was a decline in the rate of high stress from 8.4% to 5% due to management encouragement. Additionally, there was an increase in stress check consultations from 79.7% in 2017 to 98% in 2021. Further analysis shows that the healthy lifestyles management initiative showed a decline in absenteeism as well as a reduction in medical fees from 146,495 yen in the facial year 2017 to 130,000 yen in 2021. Furthermore, as seen in table one there was a decrease in Presenteeism from 35.4% to 33%, which showed a positive effect on work engagement which increased from 2.32 in the year of 2017 to 3 per cent in 2021.

Table 1: Health and productivity results of management initiatives

Results of health and productivity management initiatives			FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Consultation rate for periodic medical examinations			100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Consultation rate for detailed examinations			67.10%	86.50%	94.90%	97.10%	100%
Consultation rate forcancer examinations	ABC examinations		-	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Fecal occult blood		-	-	92.00%	93.80%	100%
Treatment rate*1	Blood pressure		87.60%	87.20%	90.20%	90.30%	93%
	Blood glucose level		75.90%	71.20%	78.30%	83.80%	85%
Obesity rate	BMI more than 25	All age groups	22.50%	23.20%	23.40%	23.60%	23%
		Under 40 years of age	13.90%	15.40%	17.30%	17.20%	17%
Rate of smoking		Total	20.80%	20.40%	20.80%	18%	17%
		Male	30.00%	29.80%	29.90%	25.80%	25%
		Female	3.50%	3.10%	3.10%	2.20%	2%
Percentage of individuals who exercise regularly*2			46.20%	45.40%	46.20%	45.40%	50%
Percentage of individuals who are well-rested through sleep			64.30%	67.00%	66.50%	75.50%	78%
Percentage of individuals who eat breakfast*3			73.40%	75.50%	74.90%	76.00%	80%
Stress check consultation rate			79.70%	84.20%	88.40%	97.20%	98%
Percentage of individuals with high stress			6.80%	8.20%	8.40%	5.30%	5%
Long working hours	Occurrence rate of overtime work exceeding 50 h per month		2.63%	2.84%	2.53%	2.58%	2.50%
	Interview rate of individuals engaging in interviews with an industrial physician		88.70%	90.00%	93.50%	94%	100%
Percentage of individuals taking annual paid leave			60.60%	62.80%	65.80%	52.80%	60%
Infectious diseases seminar (cumulative number of persons)			2,232 person	2,432 persons	2,523 persons	2,523 persons	2,800 persons
Absenteeism (percentage of individuals who were absent from work for more than 7 consecutive days due to non-occupational injury or illness)		Physical	0.38%	0.24%	0.21%	0.12%	0.10%
		Mental	0.44%	0.40%	0.33%	0.28%	0.20%
Presenteeism (WHO-HPQ)			-	-	-	35.40%	33%
Medical fees (per individual) domestic			146,495 yen	134,091 yen	133,922 yen	133,151 yen	130,000 yen
Work engagement			2.32	2.65	2.61	2.65	3
Implementation rate for health consultations on specified conditions			-	26.30%	48.40%	40.20%	48%

Source: Adopted from (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

Figure 2, 3 and 4 showed how many program elements from the Healthy Lifestyles Challenge 8 were used. Figure 2 show a likely increase in health literacy bringing awareness to healthy lifestyle choices while in figure 3 there was a downward trend in Presenteeism in the healthy lifestyle challenge.
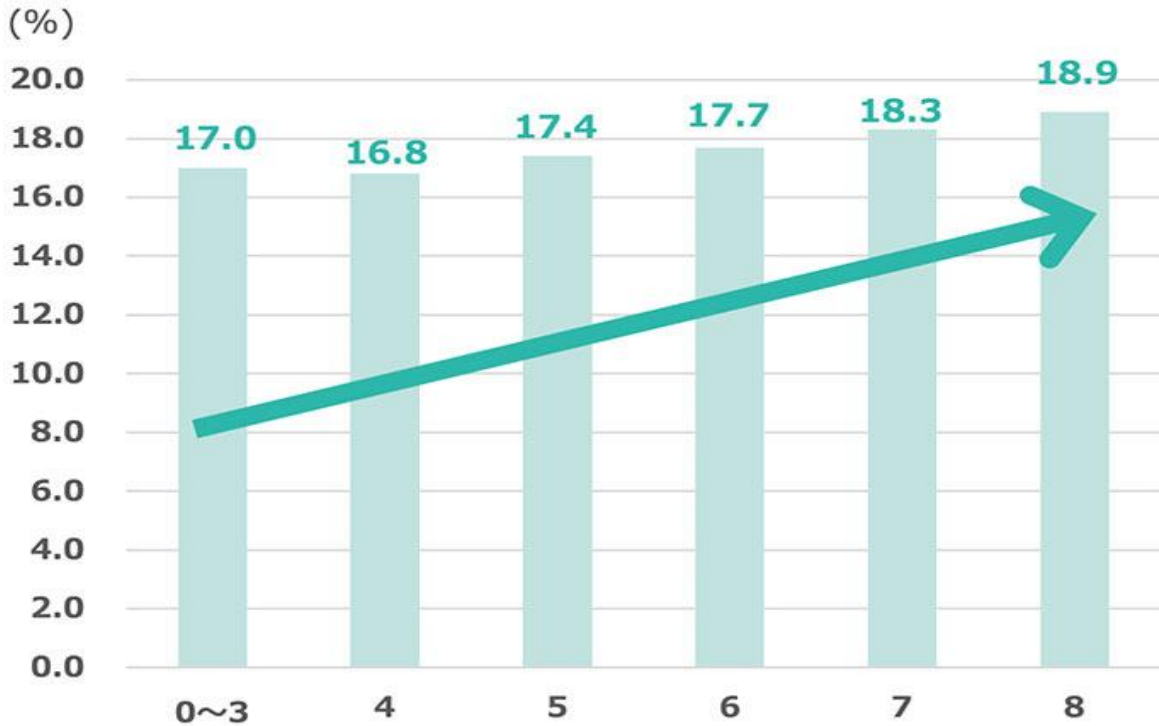

Figure 2: Health literacy (average)

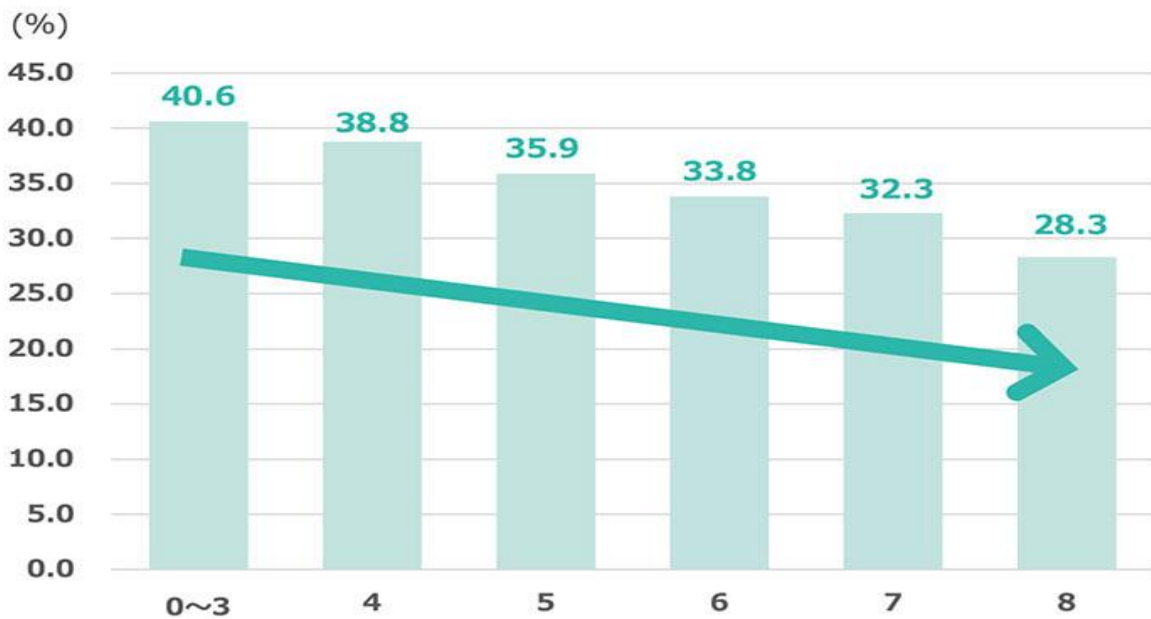*Source: Adopted from (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)*

Figure 3: Presenteeism (average)

Source: Adopted from (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

Figure 4 shows an increase in work engagement from the healthy lifestyle challenge.
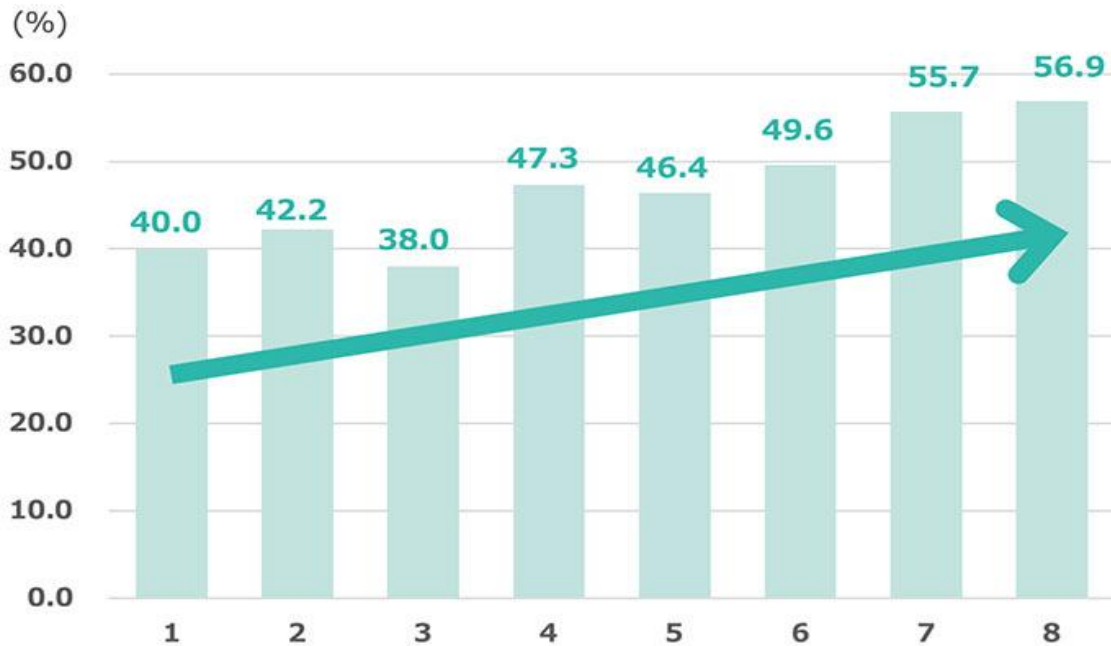

Figure 4: Work engagement (average)

Source: Adopted from (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

Table 2 shows the number of employees that participated in health seminars and work engagements from 2017 to 2021.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of health training participants and work engagement

Year	Training participants	work engagement
2017	2232	2.32
2018	2432	2.65
2019	2523	2.61
2020	2523	2.65
2021	2800	3

Sourced from (Toyota Tsusho website, n.d)

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

Table 3 shows regression analysis on the number of employees who participated in health seminars indicating health literacy rate from 2017 to 2021 and their levels of work engagement representing commitment. The result showed that Multiple R which is the correlation coefficient was 0.974. This suggests a positive relationship between health literacy and work engagement. Additionally, from the table, R Square was observed to be 0.950.

Table 3: Regression output

SUMMARY OUTPUT

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.97493
R Square	0.950488
Adjusted R Square	0.933985
Standard Error	0.062001
Observations	5

Therefore, the null hypothesis (H1) that health and safety measures have no effects on employee commitment is rejected and the alternative (H2) Health and safety measures have great effects on employee commitment is upheld. On the relationship between health literacy and work engagement, Figure 5 shows that, as the number of participants involved in health and safety initiatives increased, work engagement equally increased.
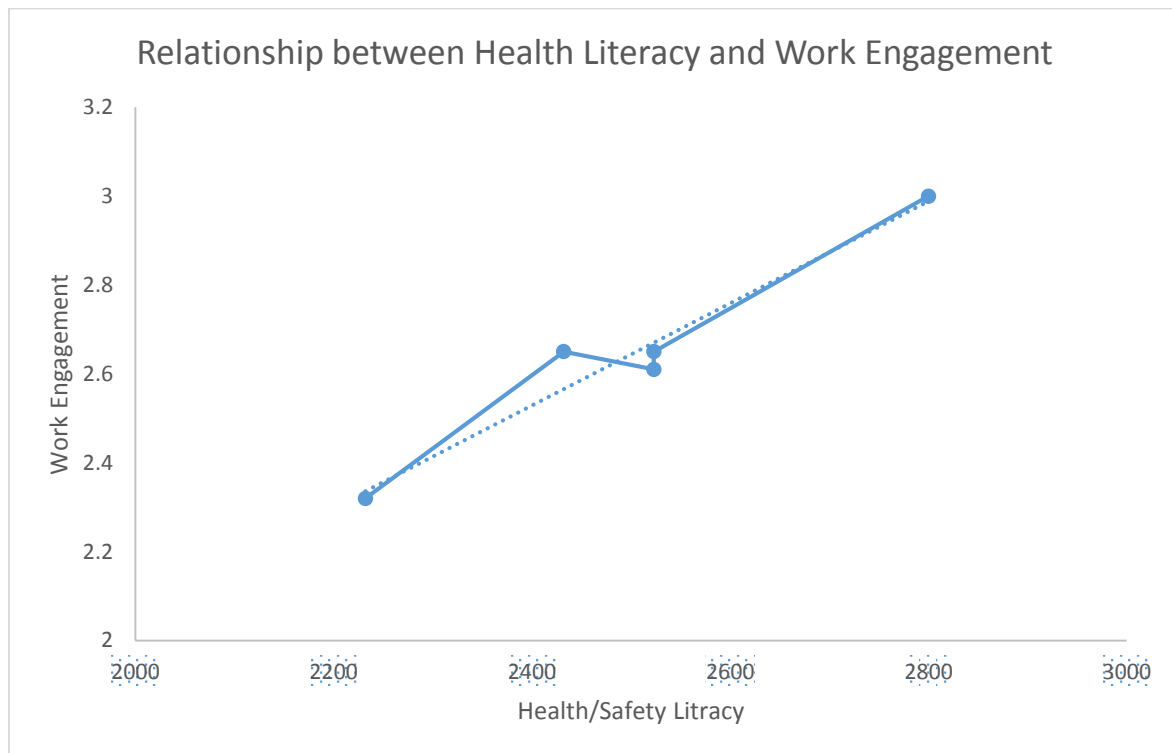

Figure 5: Relationship between health literacy and work engagement

The findings showed that health and safety measures had a positive influence on employee commitment. As shown in the graphs as employees' health literacy increased, presentism decreased leading to an increase in work engagement (commitment). The findings revealed that management health initiates were patronized by employees increasing health literacy rate and improving a healthy lifestyle among the employees. These findings conform to the findings of Michael et al. (2005) that, raising employees' views of management's concern for their well-being through a commitment to safety will have positive effects along with improved safety performance.

The results are consistent with (Teo, Bentley & Nguyen, 2020) suggestions about work engagement, which is a favorable attitude toward work, and employees' affective commitment to the company as the final result. One aspect of an employee's well-being is thought to be their level of work engagement.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The findings showed that health and safety measures had a positive influence on employee commitment; as health literacy increased, presentism decreased leading to an increase in work engagement. The findings also revealed that management health initiates were patronized by employees increasing health literacy rate and improving a healthy lifestyle among the employees. These findings conform to the findings of Michael et al. (2005) that, raising employees' views of management's concern for their well-being through a commitment to safety will have positive effects along with improved safety performance.

The decrease in presenteeism conforms to Haque et al. (2017), that effective health and safety management can increase employees' motivation to maintain their organizational commitment and dissuade them from leaving. In essence, this is a rational response: employees who perceive that their employer cares about their health and safety will be less likely to leave the organization. (Suárez-Albanchez et al., 2021). An employee is more likely to go above and provide good 'on-the-job performance' if they are more engaged at work. Furthermore, motivated staff members may be more committed to sticking with their existing company (Vance, 2006).

The results are consistent with (Zhang et al., 2013 cited in Teo, Bentley and Nguyen, 2020) suggestions about work engagement, which is a favorable attitude toward work, and employees' affective commitment to the company as the final result. One aspect of an employee's well-being is thought to be their level of work engagement. On the relationship between health literacy and work engagement, figure 5 shows that, as the number of participants involved in health and safety initiatives increased, work engagement equally increased.

5.2 Conclusion

The study had three main objectives in determining whether implementing health and safety measures in an organization affects employee commitment. Qualitative secondary data was collected from the Toyota Tsusho cooperation health and safety initiatives report. The first objective was on identifying the health and safety measures that companies had in place. The study found that Toyota Tsusho had health and safety measures in place. The second objective focused on identifying management's commitment to health and safety and how it relates to risk-causing factors. The study found that management had a commitment to health and safety in training their employees which also showed a decrease in their medical fees. Furthermore, the third objective was to examine the relationship between health and safety measures and employees' commitment to work. According to the study, there was a considerable correlation between employee engagement, and occupational health and safety.

Lastly, using the regression analysis as a test of the hypothesis the Null Hypothesis: (*Health and safety measures will have no effects on employee commitment.*) was rejected by the outcome. Consequently, the Alternative Hypothesis: *(Health and safety measures will have positive effects on employee commitment*) was verified by the findings. The results of the

study demonstrate that management safety measures and initiatives are essential for maximizing employees' commitment to their company. This indicates that to keep a loyal workforce, management must demonstrate care for their welfare by providing a healthy and safe place for the people who work for them. As a result of the fact that committed employees remain with a firm, regularly show up for work, put in a full day or more, protect corporate assets, support the company's objectives, and favourably influence them. The key finding of the study showed that as employee's participated in health and safety seminars, training and healthy lifestyle challenges the levels of Presenteeism decreased as work engagement increased showing their commitment. This indicates that educating employees on health and safety is essential for effective implementation.

5.3 Recommendations

The results of this study brings forth to managers, stakeholders, and employers some understanding of how employee commitment levels are impacted by occupational health and safety practices present on the job. If positively conceived, may aid in the development of effective interventions and policy guidelines that can be implemented to assist the employees. This study aimed to emphasize the need for management commitment to safety concerns and the adoption and implementation of best practices on workplace safety rules and enforcing them. Management's concern for health and safety practices and programs may impact employee commitment. Furthermore, human resource managers will find this to be very helpful as they will know exactly where to concentrate their efforts to achieve improved levels of safety compliance and commitment among their staff by lowering workplace-related health issues, and injuries and raising employee commitment.

Consequently, it is recommended that businesses operating in both high-risk and those with reduced risk environments, motivate employees and adopt a healthy way of life to reduce Presenteeism. It is essential to monitor risk factors that can lead to injuries while also maintaining a pleasant work environment that supports a healthy lifestyle so that employees can execute their responsibilities swiftly and efficiently. Management must prioritize employee safety by putting in place procedures and supplying tools that lower the number of mishaps, illnesses, and injuries. Finally, this research discovered that as employees become aware of their health and adopt healthy lifestyles the level of presenteeism decreases and increases work engagement adding to the body of knowledge.

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