PUBLIC SHARING – THE IMPORTANCE OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY – SRICHIWAN WITTAYA SCHOOL, YALA, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

Occupational health and safety (OHS) play a crucial role in protecting workers, reducing workplace accidents, and ensuring sustainable construction practices. In rapidly developing economies, especially in the construction sector, the absence of proper safety protocols often leads to injuries, productivity loss, and legal consequences. This community service program titled "Public Sharing – The Importance of Occupational Health and Safety" was conducted at Srichiwan Wittaya School, Yala, Thailand, with the aim of increasing awareness and knowledge among students regarding the fundamental principles of OHS in construction. The program combined theoretical discussions, interactive workshops, and group activities to introduce essential safety practices, including hazard identification, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), and emergency response procedures. The outcomes revealed significant improvements in students' understanding of safety culture, risk assessment, and preventive strategies. This initiative emphasized the importance of proactive safety behavior as a foundation for future professional conduct and fostered collaboration between educational institutions in Indonesia and Thailand to promote safety literacy.

Keywords: *AutoCAD; Occupational Health and Safety (OHS); Construction Safety; Hazard Identification; Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); Safety Culture; Community Service.*

INTRODUCTION

The construction industry remains one of the most hazardous sectors worldwide, with high rates of occupational injuries and fatalities. Workers are frequently exposed to risks such as falls, electrocution, heavy machinery accidents, and hazardous materials. Despite significant advancements in construction technology, inadequate safety training and weak safety culture continue to contribute to preventable accidents. Occupational health and safety (OHS) is a multidisciplinary field aimed at promoting safe working environments by identifying hazards, assessing risks, and implementing preventive measures.

Students pursuing careers in civil engineering, architecture, or project management must understand the importance of OHS from an early stage. Unfortunately, many educational curricula lack sufficient emphasis on workplace safety principles. Community-based education initiatives can help bridge this gap by introducing students to the real-world implications of safety management.

This public sharing program at Srichiwan Wittaya School in Yala, Thailand, was designed to enhance students' understanding of OHS principles in construction. The initiative focused on building a foundational knowledge of safety standards, legal frameworks, and practical safety practices, preparing students to become responsible professionals capable of contributing to safer work environments.

METHODOLOGY

The program was structured into three main stages—planning, implementation, and evaluation—to achieve the learning objectives.

1. Planning Stage

The organizing team collaborated with Srichiwan Wittaya School to identify students' knowledge gaps and develop teaching modules focused on OHS fundamentals. Materials included visual aids, case studies, and demonstration equipment.

2. Implementation Stage

The program combined lectures, workshops, and simulations. Key topics included:

- Introduction to OHS concepts and legal requirements.
- Hazard identification and risk assessment in construction sites.
- Proper use of PPE and safety signage.
- Emergency procedures and incident reporting.

3. Evaluation Stage

Participants completed a post-training quiz and participated in group discussions to reflect on their learning experiences. Feedback was collected to assess the program's effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Student Engagement and Participation

The public sharing event attracted significant participation from students aged 15 to 18, many of whom had limited prior knowledge of OHS. Engagement levels were high, particularly during practical demonstrations such as PPE usage and hazard mapping exercises.

2. Knowledge Gains

Pre- and post-training assessments showed a notable increase in participants' understanding of key safety principles. Students demonstrated improved ability to identify workplace hazards and propose control measures based on the hierarchy of controls.

3. Development of Safety Awareness

One of the most significant outcomes was the development of a proactive safety mindset. Students recognized the importance of personal responsibility and teamwork in maintaining safe work environments. The training encouraged them to adopt preventive behaviors that could be applied in both academic and professional contexts.

4. Challenges Encountered

Language barriers and limited familiarity with technical terms initially posed challenges. These were addressed through bilingual materials and contextual explanations. Time constraints also limited the depth of some discussions, highlighting the need for extended sessions in future programs.

Figure 1. Classroom session

C0NCLUSION

The community service program on "The Importance of Occupational Health and Safety" successfully enhanced students' knowledge and awareness of workplace safety principles in the construction sector. Through lectures, workshops, and simulations, participants gained a comprehensive understanding of hazard identification, PPE usage, risk assessment, and emergency response. The program fostered a proactive safety culture, which is essential for preventing workplace accidents and promoting sustainable construction practices.

This initiative also strengthened cross-border educational collaboration and highlighted the value of integrating OHS education into school curricula. Future programs could expand to include advanced topics such as ergonomics, environmental safety, and digital safety monitoring tools.

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