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CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Project managers in today's construction industry are faced with a situation whereby the fundamental roles and functions they perform are witnessing a gradual shift in focus. To maintain their professional competency, practising project managers in construction adapt to this changing industry environment by relying on knowledge and skills acquired through training and experience.

Keywords: Construction; Project managers; Knowledge; Skills; Experience

INTRODUCTION

The construction industry is an essential contributor to the process of development. Roads, dams, irrigation works, school, house, hospitals, factories and other construction works are the physical foundation on which development efforts and improving living standards are established. The products of the construction industry are investment or capital goods. Thus construction industry has linkage with rest of the economy in terms of generation of output and employment.

The two broad categories of construction projects are building and civil engineering. Building applies to projects involving houses, offices, shops, factories, schools, hospitals, power plants, railway stations and so on. Civil engineering applies to all the other built structures in our environments, including roads, tunnels, bridges, railways, dams, canals and docks.

METHODOLOGY

In the context of liberalization, of the Indian economy, domestic and foreign investment is likely to flow in various infrastructure projects in a big way and

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construction activity is likely to boom in the country in the next ten years to come. FDI is expected to touch 150 Billion US$ in next ten years. The construction industry, which is a labor intensive, generates demand for skilled and semi-skilled labor force. The employment in construction sector is expected to touch 40 Million by the year 2007. This work force shall comprise 55 % of unskilled labor, 27 % skilled labor and rest the technical and support staff. Though India has the human resource, it requires training in various skills for absorption in the construction industry.

The wok force in construction sector is most vulnerable because employment is permanently temporary, the employer and employee relationship is very fragile and most of the time short-lived, the work has inherent risk to life and limb due to lack of safety, health and welfare facilities, coupled with uncertain working hours. Construction labor form 7.5% of the world labor force and contributes to 16.4% of fatal global occupational accidents. In India it is the largest economic activity after agriculture, Health and Safety most neglected sector and accident and occupational disease statistic not accurately available.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The construction industry is not only the process of building. It involves many other type of aside from the building process, such as painting, landscaping, electrical supply, telecommunications, plastering and paving. All these types of work make up one industry, but each of them involves different exposure and thus differing health hazards.

Construction workers are exposed to a wide variety of health hazards at work. The exposure differs from job to job. He work-related diseases form 5% to 20% of the work force. The hazards for construction workers are typically as follows:

1. Physical hazards and mechanical injuries and outcome, like injuries, exposure to noise and vibration, extreme heat or cold, work in windy, rainy, snowy or foggy weather, nonionizing ultraviolet radiation usually from exposure to the sun and electric arc welding.

2. Chemical hazards such as dusts, fume, mists, vapors or gases. The biggest risk the construction work force is Silicosis and asbestosis.

3. Ergonomic issues and degenerative disorders

4. Biological hazards and Environmental diseases; Workers are at risk of malaria, dengue, animal attacks and histoplasmosis (a lung infection caused by a

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common soil fungus) and other diseases due to poor sanitation and unsafe drinking water.

5. Psycho-social hazards: Employment is permanently temporary, frequently changing employer and most projects require living in work camps away from one's home and family. There is no recreational facilities, lack of access to education for children, poor sanitary facilities and lack of safe drinking water. These features of construction work, as well as heavy workload, possibility of work place violence or community violence and limited social support are the factors associated with increase stress in the work force. The associated addictions with alcohol, tobacco and smoking contribute to illness and suffering.

CONCLUSION

In India there are about four million workers in the construction industry. Of these, female workers represent a small, unknown number, but now they are increasingly working in urban projects. The problems of women worker is still not addressed adequately both by law makers and the employer.

There is urgent need to bring legislative stability to employment status, risk reduction by onsite safety management and imparting training and skill development as demanded by the type of construction sector, health protection and promotion through preventive vaccination and family welfare programs. It is desirable that adequate staffing and strengthening of regulatory agency, coupled with environmental risk assessment studies and regular construction site audits shall safe guard the interests of construction worker in our country. Government must also create mechanism for feed back from NGO, National Safety Council, IAOH, Research institutes and other global networking partners and institute mid course correction policies from time to time. Employer must also focus on providing decent housing, safe water educational and recreational facilities construction employees. In conclusion, the government and all stake holders connected with construction industry must aim at accident prevention (save life and save limb), health protection and psycho-social health, education, training and skill development, must strengthen legal machinery and increase public awareness on OHS legislation and standards and scope for applied research and development. In my humble opinion this is minimum wish list for change one expects from people connected with construction sector.

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