

The Misuse Of Alcohol And Drug Abuse In The Construction Industry

Posted on October 2, 2019

Background

Alcohol and substance abuse at the workplace have increased alarmingly over the last few decades throughout the world. Workers in the construction industry have high rates of drug use and related psychological disorders as compared to those workers who work in other organisations (Ramchand et al., 2009, p. 20). A negative link has also been reported between drug use by workers in the construction industry and the productivity of the company, workplace accidents, absenteeism, illness, injuries and low morale (SAMHSA, 2007, p. 28; Swena, 1999, p.10). Considerate Constructors Scheme, back in 2016, surveyed to investigate the rate of drug use in UK construction companies and found that 35% had noticed their colleagues were under the influence of drugs (CCS, 2016, p. 23; Porter, 2012). The use of drugs and alcohol is so common at construction sites that it is sometimes seen as invisible, as no supervisor takes notice of it. Moreover, a report conducted by Alberta Health Services (2010, p. 9) found that construction companies are at higher risk of alcohol usage, tobacco use, and illicit drug use.

Substance use has a significant impact on the physical, mental, and emotional state of workers and is related to decreased productivity, high absenteeism, and high levels of on-site injuries (Smallwood, 1998, p. 353). Substance abuse also triggers criminal and violent behaviour in the workplace. The chances of workplace violence increase when there is a high rate of drug usage by workers, as they might sometimes be involved in the theft. (Chandler, 2014, p. 3; Anderson, 2012, p. 14).

NBGH (2009, p. 7) has enlisted a number of symptoms that are related to employees' workplace performance that are considered important indicators of substance use, including early departures, extended lunch breaks, disregard for personal or others' safety, needless risk-taking, errors in judgement, carelessness, unexplained disappearance from the worksite, increased absenteeism, lowered productivity, and poor work quality.

Poor worker conduct has also been reported to be linked with substance use. NBGH (2009, p. 7) has also enlisted some behavioural symptoms related to substance use, such as avoiding colleagues, complaints about their vague illness, blaming others for their shortcomings, and continuous complaints about family issues.

Researchers have reported that misuse of alcohol and other related drugs at the workplace is an essential social policy issue as it might decrease workers' health, the organisation's productivity, and employees' competence (Frone, 2004, p. 127). Due to the increases in drug and substance usage at

the workplace, there is a high need to explore this phenomenon in the construction industry and its impact on employee's mental.

Aims And Objectives

Given below are the aims and objectives of the present study:

1. To find out the type of drugs workers use in the construction industry,
2. To investigate the extent of worker alcohol and drug use in the construction industry,
3. To determine the impact of drug usage on employees' mental health.

Research Strategy

The survey research design will be used to conduct the present research. The web-based survey will be designed to collect the data.

Plan Of Work

Workers of a construction company will be identified and approached via email. They will also be asked to complete a web-based survey related to drug usage and mental health. The questionnaires will be selected that will assess the extent of drug usage by workers and their mental health. A demographic form which will take questions related to their age, history of drug use, type of drug and the quantity they take would be asked. Informed consent will be obtained, and they will be assured that the obtained data will be used for research purposes only and that their identity will not be disclosed. A period of 6 – months would be required for data collection and analysis. The appropriate analysis will be used to find out the results.

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