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National Occupational Safety and Health Updates 2015 to 2020 towards OSH Preventative Culture in Business Organizations in Malaysia

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Abstract: Traditionally, neoclassical economics in most of the developing countries are highly dependent on both the private and public sectors for the purposes of policymaking. In order to close the gaps that exist in the current OSH policy system, both employers and employees in any business organization are urged to demonstrate full commitment on OSH programs and plans. This paper aimed to summarize the latest OSH policy updates under the government bodies and agencies in Malaysia that affect business activities in all organizations. It is hoped that with these important policies made, the safe and healthy working culture would be positively implemented at the workplaces. To date, the rapid economic transformation in Malaysia requires more proactive insights into the OSH policy and mechanisms, to fulfil the demand of the rapid developmental goals. The summary findings of this OSH report overview could serve as the reference point to understand the development and gaps present from the year 2015 – 2020.

Keywords: National Report, OSH Policy, Preventive Culture, Safety and Health.

Introduction

The nation's wellbeing, and a commitment to sustainable and inclusive development, are essential hallmarks of a developed nation (Helali, 2012). The goal of the government is not only to increase GDP (gross domestic product) but also a balance in equitable wealth distribution and enhanced wellbeing. The contribution of OSH to the Malaysian wellbeing index is by improving the working environment, taking into consideration man-days lost due to industrial action, trade disputes, average working hours and industrial accidents. The GTP (Government Transformation Program) has been phased over three periods, and is committed to delivering outcomes across each of Malaysia; People First, Performance Now dimensions. The GTP has an objective to expand perception of the public towards safety, particularly through public volunteerism and

participation (Schenker, 2010; Anal, Ahmad, Razalli, & Min, 2018). Furthermore, ETP (Economic Transformation Programme) aims to create a better fit between the skills demanded in the labour market and the skills developed. It highlights Malaysia's need for well-trained individuals with the right vocational and technical training.

As such, Malaysia has to take initiatives to meet the global requirements, especially to the ILO Conventions and Recommendations, so much so that the aspects of occupational safety and health of the workers could be maintained and improved continuously (Burton, 2010). This initiative will put Malaysia as one of those responsible countries when it comes to issues of occupational safety and health at the workplaces (Ghassemi & Dehnavieh, 2016; Griva, Dinas, & Flegas, 2018). This paper attempts to address the OSH development in Malaysia from 2015 to 2020 that affect business activities in all organizations, by examining the national OSH policy and mechanisms in line with the international OSH standards.

National Policy for Osh

The efforts taken toward formulating the national policy relating to occupational safety and health for the country has been in place through the long-term vision for OSH in Malaysia. Malaysia's determination to combat the challenges faced in the working environment is evident in the National Development Policy, which is comprised of the Economic Transformation Program (ETP), Government Transformation Program (GTP) and the Eleventh Malaysian Plan (2016-2020). The safety and health national plan will be a supportive document in achieving a preventive culture.

In view of this, Malaysia had embarked on its OSH Master Plans (OSHMP) and the enactment of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1994 (OSHA 1994) (Department of Occupational Safety and Health, 1994), as strategies to realize the policy for the country. The launch of the Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 2015, followed by the Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 2020, targeted towards spreading out OSH ownership, focusing on sustaining and building the self-regulation culture which would be entirely embedded into the workplace working culture, and focused on the integration of preventive safety cultures into the everyday business practice. The OSHA 1994 had been enacted with the aims of protecting persons' safety, health and welfare at work; establishing the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health; and for matters connected therewith. Eventually, the practices of safety culture will be the working culture of all employers and employees in Malaysia (Schilling, 2013; Al-Edenat, Alhawamdeh, 2018).

National Strategies for Osh

Malaysia Occupational Safety and Health Master Plans (OSH-MP)

The OSH Master Plan (OSHMP) has been established in light of Malaysia having to encounter challenges in terms of working environment and it is crucial in empowering Malaysia as a provider of the world economic community and the regional economy. Since 2005, Malaysia has been working towards creating a safe and healthy work culture by creating a five (5) years Strategic Plans (International Labour Organization [ILO], 2010): OSHMP 2005, 2010, 2015 and 2020. These Strategic Plans involve three (3) steps: ownership, self-regulation and preventive culture. In an effort to be abreast with current OSH issues and promote a safety culture, review mechanisms have been put in place and these reviews are carried out by consulting the industries (Figure 1).



Fig 1: Protocol of change from OSHMP 15 to OSHMP 20

Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 15 (OSH-MP 15)

The main aim of the OSH-MP 15 during its formulation was to construct a safe, healthy and productive group of human capital by making, sustaining and cultivating a safe and healthy work culture in all Malaysian organizations. OSH-MP 15 catalysed the creation of a more responsible organization, by providing a more precise focus and a stronger direction for business organizations in Malaysia. A major change was brought in behaviour and attitude among employers and make them develop a positive and proactive approach to OSH. This resulted in an important increase in the safety and health standards in the working setting that sets Malaysia on the right path of becoming the regional centre of superiority and leader in OSH.

The OSH leadership by the government and industries, complemented by community engagement, had driven and directed the development of workplace safety and health initiatives. New OSH skills and competencies have been acquired, while strategic OSH alliances with partners at both regional and global levels have been in place and operating effectively. The result of improvement in work safety and health had thus contributed to safer, healthier and more productive pools of human capital.

The specific objectives of the OSH MP 15 are evidently:

- To enhance knowledge and awareness in OSH and commitment to OSH in all activities both small and big businesses (Kheni, Gibb, & Dainty, 2010);
- To decrease the rates of workplace injuries and related fatalities;
- To decrease the amount of occupational lung diseases, occupational noise-related impediments such as hearing loss and occupational skin diseases; and
- To minimize their unfortunate effects on productivity, business performance and efficiency.

The four (4) key strategies to achieve the OSH-MP 15 scenario, along with their expected outcomes have been identified as setting out the national targets in workplace safety and health

and articulate the characteristics that Malaysia must demonstrate to ensure the sustainability of its human capital through implementation of safety culture at the workplace. The four strategies adopted for the implementation of the OSH-MP 15 are shown in Table 1.

Occupational Safety and Health Master Plan 2016-2020

The OSH-MP 2020 focuses on a preventative safety and health culture by the ILO ratification Convention C187 (ILO, 2010)-Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187) which emphasizes “a culture wherein the right to a healthy and safe working environment is appreciated at all levels, where workers, employers and government participate actively in safeguarding a healthy and safe working environment over a system of clear duties, responsibilities and rights, and where the prevention principle is rendered the highest priority”.

Table 1: Key Strategies of OSH-MP 15

NO.	STRATEGIES	PROGRAMS
1.	Fostering and Enhancing Government Leadership and Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Increase the OSH policy and legal framework. b) Offer compliance support to OSH legislation. c) Apply an influential implementation regime. d) Run different programs and new methods to advance OSH. e) OSH best practices' compilation. f) Reinforce the NIOSH. g) Simplify OSH information services and training h) Empower the government capacity to affect OSH outcomes. i) Encourage, develop and facilitate OSH research and development (OSH R&D). j) Recognition and incentive scheme for worthy OSH performer. k) Present risk based social security scheme. l) Confirmation of ILO directives and conventions. m) Return and rehabilitation to work program.
2.	Inculcating Preventive Workplace Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Promote safety culture. b) Avoid occupational diseases more efficiently. c) Remove hazards at the design phase. d) Develop and Design safe products, systems and environments. e) Advance injury prevention information and knowledge. f) Enhance quality and quantity of OSH practitioners.
3.	Industry Leadership and Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Construct robust capabilities to better manage OSH. b) Industry-led OSH outreach programs by correlated association (FMM, MEF, CICM, MAPA, MTUC, etc.)

NO.	STRATEGIES	PROGRAMS
	Community Engagement	c) Improving large organizations (GLCs, MNCs) on sub-contractor, supplier and vendor. d) Reflect and estimate the real costs of accidents and boost a business case for better OSH management. e) Create the practice of containing OSH performance in contracts. f) Disseminate and publish timely and useful OSH information (association and company).
4.	Strong Partnership Locally and Internationally	a) Enhance the capabilities of the NCOSH. b) Enhance international collaboration (OSHNet). c) Grow local OSH specialists to sit in international bodies and committee.

The elements of general principles of prevention include:

- a) Removal of occupational hazards;
- b) Fighting the risks at the source;
- c) Adjusting to technical progress;
- d) Giving collective protective measures priority over individual protective measures;
- e) Assessment of dangers that are unavoidable;
- f) Adjusting the work to the individual, particularly as regards the workplaces design, the choice of working and equipment and production methods;
- g) Substituting hazardous substances by non-hazardous or less hazardous ones; and
- h) Providing suitable instructions to the workers.

The main strategy of the OSH-MP 2020 is the instilling of a repellent culture at the workplace. This method will follow through with the inculcation and implementation of the principle of self-regulation and responsibility among workers and employers. The preventative culture sets a great premium on responsibility, commitment and awareness among workers and employers, respect for the workers' rights concerning OSH, encouragement of the workers' involvement in OSH activities, improved OSH skills and knowledge, in addition to capable OSH management which is founded on efficient risk management.

To realize this goal, the OSH-MP 2020 would be implemented through the five strategies shown in Table 2. These five strategies of the OSH-MP 2020 are in turn strengthened by different activities and programmes focused on cherishing the preventative culture among workers and employers. To ensure its success, apart from the workers and employers' commitment, the OSH-MP 2020 provides the responsibilities and duties of all stakeholders that are the Government, competent persons, associations and related parties with effect over workers and employers.

Transformation Strategies from OSH-MP 15 to OSH-MP 20

One of the key points that the OSH-MP 15 focused on is to alleviate the standing of Malaysia in the eyes of its trading partners around the world with regards to improvements in safety and health within the country. As such, the key thrust of the OSH-MP 15 is the internalization of OSH itself, with the trading partners as supporting counterparts in the developed as well as other

developing nations. Malaysia needs to keep abreast with the current OSH situations and demand for workers' rights. The protection is to be guaranteed to workers in employment, not only in terms of paid wages and union activities but also in terms of protection of OSH to all workers in the country irrespective of whether they are local or foreign (ILO, 2013). During this transformation, the country has achieved the following milestones:

- Updating the legislation on OSH during the OSH-MP 15 in order to meet the expectation of the international bodies standards and requirements like the ILO, WHO, EU and other international bodies.
- Strive to cater new emerging issues like nuclear, stress at work, drug abuse and gender issues that will impact workers at the workplaces.
- In the ASEAN OSHNET (ASEAN Occupational Safety and Health Network), where the ASEAN member countries agreed to establish the ASEAN OSHNET among the National OSH Centres in ASEAN member countries, and actively participating and working together to cooperate in many areas of cooperation in OSH.
- Become the leader and the Director General of the Department of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), Malaysia was the second ASEAN OSHNET Executive Director to take the lead through our experience in many areas on occupational safety and health.
- A recognized leader in industrial hygiene, occupational health and also management of ergonomics and chemical safety and played the key role of the country in ASEAN OSHNET activities that compelled the OIC (Organization Islamic Country) to recognize Malaysia as the champion in OSH among Islamic countries (Niu, 2010).
- Malaysia had actively participated in the Working Committee on Safety and Health at the OIC in Turkey with the Director General of DOSH chaired the meeting and being entrusted to prepare the Blueprint for the OIC for OSH cooperation and activities. This effort would be a move for OIC to promote safety and health agendas among member countries apart from the ASEAN member countries.
- Our expert reference in OSH is sought after by the member countries through presentations of papers in conferences and seminars, specific training and short courses delivered to other Asian countries like Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka as well as several African countries.

Table 2: Implementation of OSH-MP 2020 through Five Strategies

NO.	STRATEGIES	PROGRAMS
1.	Government Leadership in OSH	a) Government as role model for OSH. b) Sharing of OSH in the country (NCOSH). c) Policies and legislations. d) OSH data and research. e) Capacity of enforcers.
2.	Strengthening of OSH Management at the Workplace	a) OSH knowledge and skills. b) OSH compliance assistance. c) Promotion of preventive culture. d) OSH innovation. e) Effective OSH enforcement. f) Increase of numbers and quality of OSH practitioners.
3.	OSH Sharing and Network	a) Supply network and chain. b) OSH through association activities. c) OSH through social responsibility. d) OSH for prospective workers.
4.	Mainstreaming Industrial Hygiene	a) Re-engineering of industrial hygiene management. b) Comprehensive health risk assessment. c) Occupational health services program at the workplace. d) Industrial hygiene outreach program. e) Effective enforcement of legislation relating to industrial hygiene.
5.	International OSH Strategic Alliances	a) Collaboration with international OSH institutes and experts. b) Study of international OSH standards. c) National and international hygiene collaborative networks.

OSH Framework and Programs for Malaysia towards Compliance to the ILO Conventions C155 and C187

In an effort to promote health and safety at work, the International Labour Organization has come out with a series of Conventions and Code of Practices relating to every area of economic activities. Countries that ratified these Conventions are required to adhere to them by carrying out the requirements initiated in each of these Conventions. Malaysia like many other countries has ratified some of these Conventions, among them being the International Labour Organization Convention C187.

C187 was adopted at Geneva during the 95th Session of the International Labour Conference which took place on the 15th of June 2006. C187 Convention deals with the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health. It entered into force on the 20th of February 2009, and Malaysia ratified this Convention on the 7th of June 2012. Another Convention that Malaysia

has dealt with extensively is C155. This Convention was drawn in 1981 in Geneva, which was the 67th Session of the General Conference of the International Labour Organization. This Convention deals with Occupational Safety and Health and the Working Environment. It entered into force on the 11th of August 1983. Though Malaysia has not ratified this Convention, it has covered requirements laid down in the C155 (ILO, 1983).

Efforts toward Compliance of the National OSH Strategies to ILO

Through the ILO Convention C187 ratification, Malaysia had strategized activities related to OSH through the OSHMP 2010-2015 and OSHMP 2016-2020. The efforts in Malaysia to keep its OSH practices consistent with the Articles laid down in the ILO Convention C187 are shown in Appendix 1. While Malaysia is ratifying the ILO Convention C155, the enactment and enforcement of the OSHA 1994 and the activities carried out to achieve the objects of the Act are evidence of efforts to comply with the Articles set out under C155. More light into this effort are shown in Appendix 2.

Conclusion

In the current absence of official published reports about the occupational safety and health strategies among developing countries, this article provides an official and organized insight on the transformation of OSH in Malaysia, with the implemented strategies as well as milestones achieved. This could serve as a benchmark among the developing countries, which strikes to improve the OSH performance in the nation and at the same time facilitate the way forward for OSH practitioners and professionals in the OSH field. In entirety, the aspects of occupational safety and health of the workers could be maintained and improved continuously since the OSH initiative will put Malaysia as one of those responsible countries when it comes to issues of occupational safety and health at the workplaces. Further, the practices of safety culture will be the working culture of all employers and employees in Malaysia, and the OSH Master Plans become the catalyst for creation of a more responsible organization, by providing a more precise focus and a stronger direction for business organizations in Malaysia. A major change was also brought in behaviour and attitude among employers and make them develop a positive and proactive approach to OSH. This resulted in an important increase in the safety and health standards in the working setting that sets Malaysia on the right path of becoming the regional centre of superiority and leader in OSH.

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Appendix 2: Efforts in Malaysia to keep its OSH Practices in line with the ILO Convention 155

OSH-MP 15 (2010-2015) STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES	C155	OSH-MP 2020 (2016-2020) STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMMES
<p>STRATEGY 1 FOSTERING AND ENHANCING GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP AND PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the legal and policy framework of OSH. • Provide compliance support to OSH legislation. • Compilation of OSH best practices. • Facilitate, develop and encourage OSH R&D. • Facilitate OSH training and information services. • Build strong capabilities to better manage OSH. 	<p>ARTICLE 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulate National Policy. <p>ARTICLE 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance to legal obligations. <p>ARTICLE 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual publication of measures taken in pursuance of the policy and research. <p>ARTICLE 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep abreast of scientific and technical knowledge. <p>ARTICLE 14</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and training. 	<p>STRATEGY 1 GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSH Policies and Legislations. • OSH Service Delivery (DOSH). • OSH Data and Research. • National Institute for OSH training roles.
<p>STRATEGY 2 PREVENTIVE WORKPLACE SAFETY CULTURES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punitive scheme for bad OSH performer. • Eliminate hazards at the design stage. • Develop and design safe environments, products and systems. 	<p>ARTICLE 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Penalties for violations of laws and regulations. <p>ARTICLES 5 & 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main spheres of actions. 	<p>STRATEGY 2 STRENGTHENING OF OSH MANAGEMENT AT THE WORKPLACE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSH Legislation. • OSH Knowledge and Competence.
<p>STRATEGY 3 INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate and publish timely and useful OSH information. • Build strong capabilities to better manage OSH. • Reflect and estimate the real cost of promote and 	<p>ARTICLE 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convention applies to all workers in the branches of economic activity. <p>ARTICLE 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formulation of policy to indicate functions and responsibilities in respect of OSH and the working environment of public 	<p>STRATEGY 3 OSH SHARING AND NETWORKING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network and Supply Chain. • Legal Requirements for Quality of OSH Practitioners. • OSH through Association.

<p>accidents good OSH managements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the practice of including OSH performance in contracts. 	<p>authorities, employers, workers and others.</p> <p>ARTICLE 12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate communication. <p>ARTICLE 21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSH measures not to include expenditure for the workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSH through CSR.
<p>STRATEGY 4 DEVELOP STRONG PARTNERSHIPS LOCALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing inter-agency collaboration and intervention activities. 	<p>ARTICLE 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordination and corporation. 	<p>STRATEGY 4 MAINSTREAMING INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE</p> <p>STRATEGY 5 INTERNATIONAL OSH STRATEGIC ALLIANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with International OSH Experts and Institutes.