

The Effect of Ergonomic Expertise on the Success of Ergonomic Programs and Activities

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Ergonomic programs have been shown to have high rates of failure. The purpose of this paper was to identify if the inclusion of ergonomic expertise was an important factor to ergonomic program success.

Data was collected by way of a cross sectional, multiple-choice survey to Joint Health and Safety Co-Chairs from the manufacturing sector. Survey questions constructed a verbal hierarchy which represented an ordinal scale from 1 to 5. The first question pertained to Program Status which established the facility's ergonomic activities at that time. The next 30 questions were divided into three sections titled "About Your Workplace", "Ergonomic Activities" and "Ergonomic Program Outcomes", in addition two final open questions asked about workplace barriers and benefactors to reducing musculoskeletal disorders. Data from survey questions and survey sections was correlated, cross tabulated and tested for reliability.

Reliability scores for each survey section were found to be acceptable and a strong correlation was found between the Ergonomic Activities and Ergonomic Program Outcomes sections. These two sections also correlated strongly to the Program Status question and the About Your Workplace section. Answers to open ended questions were organized into categories reflected in the literature.

The correlations indicate that there was an association between the involvement of ergonomic expertise and the success of ergonomic programs and activities. Additional findings demonstrated that this association is influenced by the quantity of time spent on ergonomic issues, company size and the formal recognition of workplace ergonomic personnel.