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Risk management at hazardous jobs: A new media literacy?

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ABSTRACT

In 2022, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported 5,486 fatal work injuries, reflecting a 5.7% increase from 2021. This alarming trend highlights the persistent dangers associated with hazardous occupations, with the fatal work injury rate rising to 3.7 fatalities per 100,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers. This article contends that traditional risk management approaches are inadequate to counter this trend and advocates for the integration of media literacy as an essential component of workplace safety. Media literacy equips workers to critically analyze and resist the influence of media narratives, particularly those on visual platforms such as Instagram and TikTok, that glamorize high-risk behaviors. Such narratives can promote unsafe workplace practices by encouraging employees to engage in dangerous activities to showcase exceptional skills. The article argues that corporations in construction sector and other hazardous industries bear the responsibility of organizing media literacy workshops for their employees. These programs can further critical awareness and encourage safer decision-making to help reduce the occurrence of workplace fatalities.

INTRODUCTION

Workplace safety has long been a critical area of concern, governed by laws and ethical principles aimed at protecting the welfare of employees. The rapid industrialization of the 20th century and the subsequent rise of hazardous occupations brought workplace safety to the forefront of labor regulations (Rosner & Markowitz, 1987). However, recent trends indicate a growing convergence between legal

frameworks and ethical responsibilities as both strive to address emerging challenges in workplace safety. Countries are now increasingly value their workforce's safety, both due to ethical issues and strategic purposes.

The legislative aspect of workplace safety finds its roots in historical struggles for labor rights. Landmark legal frameworks such as the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970 in the United States have established stringent

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standards for identifying and mitigating workplace hazards (Rickner, 1973). OSHA mandates employers to provide a safe and healthful work environment, emphasizing hazard assessment, employee training, and compliance with established safety standards (Cowan, 1982). Penalties for noncompliance underscore the seriousness with which governments enforce these measures, reflecting an evolving understanding of safety as a fundamental right.

In recent years, the global surge in occupational fatalities, exemplified by the 5,486 work-related deaths reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2022, has prompted a reevaluation of legal policies (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2024). Governments worldwide are recognizing that traditional safety regulations, while essential, are not sufficient to address the complexities of modern workplaces. The integration of technology, gig economy practices, and increasing reliance on temporary and contract labor create new safety risks that require adaptive and innovative legal responses.

While legal frameworks provide the structural backbone for workplace safety, ethical considerations inject a deeper sense of responsibility into organizational practices. Ethical workplace safety revolves around the principle of prioritizing employee well-being over operational or financial gains. This ethos extends beyond regulatory compliance, urging employers to proactively address risks and cultivate a culture of safety that respects the dignity and value of human life.

Philosophical theories such as deontology and utilitarianism reinforce the ethical mandate for workplace safety. Deontological ethics, for instance, emphasizes duty and the moral obligation of employers to ensure their workers are not exposed to preventable harm. Conversely, a utilitarian perspective advocates for safety measures that maximize overall happiness by preventing injuries and fatalities that have cascading negative impacts on workers' families and communities (De Colle & Werhane, 2008; Dean, 1993).

Ethical considerations have gained even more prominence in the context of corporate social responsibility (CSR). Modern organizations are increasingly expected to demonstrate a commitment to safety as part of their broader CSR agendas. This expectation is particularly pronounced in hazardous industries such as construction, mining, and

manufacturing, where the stakes for neglecting safety measures are exponentially higher.

The involvement of both law and ethics is particularly evident in the implementation of workplace safety programs. Legal mandates often serve as the minimum standard, establishing clear guidelines for safety protocols. However, ethical considerations push organizations to exceed these benchmarks, encouraging innovation and proactivity in risk management. For example, while OSHA may require basic safety training, ethically driven organizations might invest in advanced simulation-based training modules that enhance workers' preparedness for high-risk scenarios.

The COVID-19 pandemic further illustrated the close connection between law and ethics in workplace safety. Governments introduced emergency regulations to curb the spread of the virus, such as mandatory mask-wearing and physical distancing measures. However, many organizations went beyond legal requirements, implementing measures like paid sick leave and mental health support programs. These actions, driven by ethical considerations, underscore the need for a comprehensive approach to workplace safety that marries legal obligations with a genuine concern for employee welfare (Mann, Clarke & Johnson, 2024).

The modern workplace presents a host of challenges that test the boundaries of both law and ethics. Another pressing challenge is the societal glorification of risk-taking, amplified by social media platforms. In certain industries, such as construction or extreme sports, workers may feel pressured to engage in unsafe practices to gain recognition or validation online. This phenomenon highlights the limitations of traditional legal and ethical frameworks, which are often ill-equipped to address the influence of cultural and technological factors on workplace safety.

As workplaces become increasingly globalized, the need for harmonized safety standards is more urgent than ever. Multinational corporations operating across diverse regulatory environments face the challenge of maintaining consistent safety practices. International organizations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have been instrumental in promoting global safety standards. However, ethical considerations must also guide these efforts, ensuring

that companies do not exploit regulatory loopholes in jurisdictions with weaker safety laws. Sabbar and Dalvand's (2018) semiotic analysis of cultural dynamics provides valuable insight into this challenge. Their research demonstrates how global practices don't simply override local contexts but rather blend with them to create unique cultural expressions. This understanding is crucial for workplace safety initiatives, as it suggests that effective safety programs must consider both international standards and local cultural norms.

For example, ethical globalization in workplace safety might involve the voluntary adoption of higher safety standards than those required by local laws. This practice not only protects workers but also enhances a company's reputation as a socially responsible entity. Moreover, global supply chains add another layer of complexity, as companies must ensure that safety practices are upheld not only within their own operations but also among their suppliers and contractors. Providing sound and practical medial literacy is another responsibility for employers that is a core focus of this article. Part of this literacy should teach workers and employees that they have themselves ethical and legal responsibilities too.

While employers bear the primary duty of ensuring a safe work environment, employees have an equally significant role in maintaining their own safety and contributing to a collective culture of safety. This ethical responsibility arises from the understanding that negligence or disregard for safety protocols can have far-reaching consequences, affecting not only the individual but also coworkers, the organization, and, in some cases, the broader community.

The foremost ethical obligation of every worker is to adhere strictly to established safety protocols and guidelines. These rules are designed to minimize risks and prevent accidents, often informed by years of research, experience, and industry standards. Following these regulations is not merely a legal requirement but an ethical one, as it reflects respect for one's own well-being and that of others. For example, wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) in hazardous environments is a simple yet essential practice. Failure to comply with such measures can lead to preventable injuries, putting an undue burden on colleagues and the healthcare system. Therefore, individual compliance is an

ethical duty that underscores the interconnectedness of workplace safety.

In addition to following rules, workers have a responsibility to remain vigilant and proactive in identifying potential hazards. Workplace environments can change dynamically, and risks are not always immediately apparent. Employees should be attentive to their surroundings, report unsafe conditions, and collaborate with supervisors to address potential threats. This proactive approach demonstrates accountability and a commitment to preventing harm. For instance, if a worker notices a slippery floor or malfunctioning equipment, addressing it promptly can avert accidents that could otherwise have severe repercussions. Such vigilance not only safeguards the individual but also reinforces a culture of shared responsibility within the workplace.

Another critical ethical aspect -and the focal point of this article- is ongoing education and skill development in safety practices. Workers must actively seek opportunities to improve their understanding of safety protocols and procedures. Many organizations offer training sessions, workshops, and resources to help employees stay updated on best practices. Participating in such initiatives shows a dedication to personal and collective safety. Beyond formal training, individuals should remain informed about industry-specific risks and advancements in safety technology. Knowledge is a powerful tool in mitigating hazards, and staying informed reflects a proactive and conscientious attitude toward workplace safety.

Ethical responsibility also extends to fostering a positive safety culture by encouraging open communication and mutual support among coworkers. Workers should feel empowered to voice concerns about unsafe practices without fear of retaliation. This openness creates an environment where safety is prioritized and everyone feels responsible for each other's well-being. Additionally, employees should model good safety behaviors, as leading by example can inspire others to adopt similar practices. Ethical leadership at the individual level strengthens the collective effort to maintain a safe and secure work environment.

The ethical responsibilities of workers in ensuring workplace safety are inseparable from broader principles of respect, accountability, and collaboration. By adhering to safety protocols,

remaining vigilant, seeking knowledge, and fostering a supportive culture, individual employees contribute to a safer workplace for everyone. This ethical commitment not only prevents accidents but also upholds the dignity and value of human life, which should be the cornerstone of every professional setting.

Therefore, not only employers have this ethical and legal responsibility to teach employees to keep safe at workplace, the workers have this burden to help employers to provide sound education programs for them. Indeed, we insist, media literacy education is a very important part of the general educational programs and trainings at workplace.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this article emphasizes a research-driven approach to understand the relationship between media literacy education and its impact on mitigating unsafe workplace behaviors in hazardous industries. This study employs a qualitative approach based on an extensive literature review and conceptual analysis to examine the role of media literacy in mitigating unsafe workplace behaviors, particularly in hazardous industries. The research synthesizes findings from interdisciplinary sources, including occupational safety studies, media influence theories, and organizational training frameworks, to build a comprehensive argument for integrating media literacy into workplace safety programs.

Peer-reviewed journal articles, industry reports, and regulatory guidelines were analyzed to identify key themes and trends. Particular emphasis was placed on studies documenting the influence of social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok in shaping perceptions of workplace risk and behaviors, as well as those exploring the potential of educational interventions to address these issues.

FINDINGS

A Society of -More- Spectacle?

The social media has fundamentally transformed how individuals interact, communicate, and present themselves to the world. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and YouTube have evolved from simple tools for connection into arenas for constant performance (Shahghasemi, 2021). The ubiquitous

nature of these platforms has created an era where personal and professional lives are meticulously curated, documented, and shared in pursuit of validation and engagement. This pervasive need to showcase and amplify every facet of life reflects a deeper cultural shift—a societal zeal for spectacle.

The concept of turning life into a spectacle is not entirely new. Guy Debord, in his seminal work *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967), argued that modern societies are dominated by the commodification of experience, where life is not lived directly but through representations. In the current digital landscape, social media has intensified this phenomenon, transforming everyday moments into performances designed to capture attention. Whether through elaborately staged photos, viral challenges, or aspirational lifestyle posts, the pressure to constantly present an idealized self has become pervasive.

Social media platforms operate on algorithms that reward visibility, engagement, and virality, creating an environment where individuals are incentivized to compete for attention. As a result, users often prioritize sensationalism over authenticity, exaggerating or fabricating elements of their lives to align with the expectations of their audience. This compulsive performance turns mundane activities into spectacles, from sharing a carefully plated meal to documenting extreme sports or dangerous workplace stunts (Daniel & Ifeduba, 2024).

The drive to make life a spectacle is rooted in the human desire for recognition and validation. Social media metrics such as likes, shares, and comments provide tangible, albeit superficial, evidence of social approval. For many users, this validation becomes addictive, creating a feedback loop that compels them to produce increasingly sensational content to maintain or enhance their visibility. This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among younger generations who have grown up with social media as a central aspect of their social lives.

However, the compulsive need to perform comes with significant psychological costs. Studies have linked excessive social media use to increased rates of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, particularly among individuals who compare themselves unfavorably to the idealized images they encounter online. The pressure to maintain a

curated, spectacular persona often leads to a sense of disconnection between one's online identity and real-life experiences, fostering feelings of inadequacy and imposter syndrome.

Visual culture plays a critical role in the societal obsession with spectacle. Social media platforms prioritize visual content, with algorithms favoring images and videos that are aesthetically appealing, dramatic, or emotionally evocative. This emphasis on visuals amplifies the pressure to present life as a series of extraordinary moments, as static or unremarkable content is less likely to gain traction (Seeley et al., 2019).

The rise of visual-centric platforms like Instagram and TikTok has further entrenched this dynamic. Instagram, for instance, is built around the premise of sharing visually striking images, encouraging users to stage, edit, and filter their photos to achieve a polished aesthetic. TikTok, with its focus on short, dynamic videos, has popularized trends and challenges that often prioritize entertainment over authenticity. This shift toward visual spectacle has redefined what it means to share and consume content, privileging performance over genuine connection.

One of the most striking manifestations of the societal zeal for spectacle is the commodification of labor and the workplace. Social media has blurred the boundaries between professional and personal life, with individuals increasingly sharing content related to their jobs. In some cases, this involves showcasing achievements or offering insights into their work. However, in hazardous industries such as construction or extreme sports, the drive to create engaging content has led to the glorification of risky behaviors.

Workers often use social media to demonstrate their skills or participate in trending challenges, sometimes at the expense of safety. Videos of dangerous stunts or risky practices frequently go viral, garnering millions of views and likes. While these posts may provide short-term recognition, they also normalize unsafe behaviors, encouraging others to emulate them in pursuit of similar social media success. This trend highlights the darker side of the spectacle culture, where the pursuit of attention can override concerns for personal and workplace safety (Demircioglu & Chen, 2019).

The societal obsession with spectacle has

profound implications for how individuals engage with reality. As social media users prioritize performative content, the boundary between authentic experience and representation becomes increasingly blurred. This shift has led to a culture where value is ascribed not to the intrinsic quality of an experience but to its potential for spectacle. For instance, a scenic hike or a meaningful moment with friends is often viewed through the lens of its shareability, with the experience itself taking a backseat to the act of documenting and presenting it online.

This focus on spectacle, as we mentioned earlier, also reinforces harmful social norms and perpetuates unrealistic expectations. The curated nature of social media content often presents a distorted view of reality, where success, beauty, and happiness appear effortless and ubiquitous. For viewers, this can create a sense of inadequacy and pressure to conform to these manufactured ideals, further fueling the cycle of performance.

Despite its pervasive influence, the culture of spectacle is not without its critics. A growing movement of social media users and activists is pushing back against the pressures of performative culture, advocating for greater authenticity and mindful engagement. Hashtags such as #NoFilter and #RealLife have gained popularity, encouraging users to share unedited and candid content that reflects their genuine experiences.

Platforms themselves are also beginning to address the negative consequences of spectacle culture. For example, Instagram has experimented with removing visible like counts on posts to reduce the pressure for validation. Similarly, TikTok has introduced features that encourage users to take breaks from the app, promoting healthier usage habits.

The Importance of Education at Workplace

Our experience of working in diverse industries in which skilled workforce is hired show us that continuous education and training programs have vital effect in leading workers towards the so-called "best practices" paradigm. Education at the workplace is a cornerstone of organizational success, employee well-being, and the prevention of occupational hazards. As industries evolve and modern work environments become increasingly complex, the need for continuous education and skill

development grows exponentially. Education empowers employees with the knowledge, tools, and critical thinking skills necessary to adapt to workplace challenges, maintain productivity, and ensure safety. Beyond compliance with legal standards, workplace education fosters a culture of learning that enhances overall organizational resilience and competitiveness.

Tung, Chang, Ming, and Chao (2014) conducted a study to assess the efficacy of web-based education in preventing occupational hazards among clinical nursing staff. The study involved 320 female nurses from two Taiwanese hospitals and aimed to evaluate changes in knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) regarding occupational hazard prevention. Pre-intervention data revealed that human-factor hazards were the most prevalent, with 73.1% of participants reporting poor sleep quality and 69.8% experiencing low back pain. Participants were divided into experimental and control groups, with the former undergoing web-based learning interventions. Post-test results demonstrated that the experimental group showed significantly higher scores in KAP, with the most notable improvement in knowledge related to occupational hazard prevention ($p < 0.05$). While improvements in attitudes and practices were observed, they did not reach statistical significance. The study also highlighted the potential of online discussions to enhance engagement and address negative workplace factors. The authors recommend integrating online education with interactive components, such as discussions, to further strengthen participation and outcomes.

Workplace education is fundamental to enhancing the competence of employees. Regular training programs ensure that workers are equipped with the skills and knowledge required to perform their duties efficiently. In technical or high-risk industries such as healthcare, construction, and manufacturing, education directly correlates with the ability to execute tasks safely and effectively. Employees trained in the latest methodologies and tools can optimize workflows, reduce errors, and contribute to higher productivity levels.

Moreover, education facilitates the onboarding process for new employees, helping them integrate seamlessly into the organizational framework. It familiarizes them with workplace protocols,

operational procedures, and safety standards, enabling them to become contributing members of the team more quickly. Similarly, ongoing education helps existing employees stay updated on advancements in their field, ensuring their skills remain relevant in an ever-changing professional landscape.

Education plays a pivotal role in promoting a culture of safety at the workplace. By educating employees about potential hazards and the importance of adhering to safety protocols, organizations can significantly reduce the occurrence of workplace accidents and injuries. For instance, in the construction industry, workers must be trained to handle machinery correctly, recognize unsafe conditions, and respond effectively in emergencies. Comprehensive safety education not only safeguards workers' lives but also minimizes downtime and financial losses associated with workplace accidents.

Additionally, safety education fosters a sense of accountability and vigilance among employees. When workers understand the implications of unsafe behaviors, they are more likely to adopt preventive measures and encourage their peers to do the same. This collective awareness creates a proactive safety culture, wherein employees actively contribute to maintaining a secure work environment rather than relying solely on managerial oversight.

Chaïb, Taleb, Benidir, and Verzea (2014) explore strategies to promote a culture of health and safety in Algerian companies, emphasizing the human and economic toll of occupational accidents. Algeria records over 50,000 workplace accidents annually, with 750–800 resulting in fatalities and significant societal costs due to absenteeism, production disruptions, and lost workdays. Despite this, risk management practices and preventive measures remain insufficient in many organizations, particularly for high-risk industries such as oil and cement.

The authors highlight the importance of adopting a proactive approach to occupational health and safety by fostering awareness among employees, employers, and policymakers. They advocate for the integration of safety measures into daily workplace practices and stress the need for continuous improvement in risk identification and mitigation strategies. Furthermore, they argue that legislation alone is inadequate and must be complemented by organizational educational initiatives that prioritize safety and health as tools for productivity and

economic sustainability.

The modern workplace is characterized by rapid technological advancements, shifting work paradigms, and evolving risks. Education is essential for addressing these emerging challenges, as it equips employees with the adaptability needed to navigate change. For example, the widespread adoption of automation and artificial intelligence has transformed traditional roles, necessitating retraining initiatives to prepare workers for new responsibilities. Similarly, the rise of remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic introduced unique challenges such as cybersecurity risks and the need for effective virtual collaboration. Education initiatives that address these areas help organizations remain agile and resilient in the face of disruption.

Another critical challenge is the mental health and well-being of employees. Workplace education programs that emphasize stress management, emotional intelligence, and mental health awareness can mitigate the negative effects of high-pressure work environments. By educating employees on recognizing and addressing mental health issues, organizations can foster a supportive work culture that prioritizes holistic well-being.

Investing in workplace education is not merely a strategic advantage; it is also a legal and ethical responsibility. Regulatory bodies across the globe mandate various forms of workplace education, particularly in industries with high-risk environments. For instance, occupational safety training is a legal requirement in many countries to ensure compliance with labor laws and safety regulations. Failure to provide adequate education can result in legal penalties, reputational damage, and, most importantly, harm to employees.

Ethically, organizations have a duty of care to their employees, which extends to equipping them with the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and others. Workplace education demonstrates a commitment to employee welfare and underscores an organization's dedication to upholding moral values. It reflects a respect for human life and dignity, aligning with broader principles of corporate social responsibility. However, a study by Sabbar et al. (2019) reveals that assuming workers inherently understand the professional ethics of their field can be misguided. The study highlights that even highly educated individuals often lack a basic understanding of professional ethics and regulations.

This underscores the importance of comprehensive workplace safety education that addresses not only technical knowledge but also ethical responsibilities, ensuring that employees are fully prepared to navigate the complexities of their roles.

One of the most significant advantages of workplace education is its ability to bridge skill gaps within the workforce. As industries grow and evolve, the skills required for various roles can change dramatically. Education initiatives ensure that employees remain competent and capable, even as job requirements shift. This is particularly relevant in sectors undergoing technological transformation, where digital literacy and technical expertise are increasingly in demand.

Bridging skill gaps also addresses the challenge of workforce diversity. Employees from different educational backgrounds, age groups, and levels of experience may have varying competencies. Tailored education programs can level the playing field, enabling all workers to contribute effectively to organizational goals. This inclusivity not only enhances performance but also fosters a sense of belonging and collaboration within the workforce.

Oviawe, Uwameiye, and Uddin (2017) examine strategies for bridging the skill gap in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) through effective school-workplace collaboration. TVET is conceptualized as an educational intervention designed to equip individuals with relevant and marketable skills for employment and self-reliance. The authors emphasize the increasing demand for skilled labor in the 21st-century economy and the critical role of partnerships between educational institutions and industries in meeting this demand.

The paper discusses the concepts of workplace training and school-workplace collaboration in the TVET context. It highlights the mutual benefits of such collaboration: schools gain access to real-world training opportunities for students, while industries benefit from a workforce that is better prepared to meet their operational needs. The authors advocate for the adoption of best practices in workplace-school partnerships, such as curriculum alignment with industry requirements, active involvement of industry professionals in teaching, and establishment of internship and apprenticeship programs.

As we mentioned earlier, education at workplace

is not once-and-for-all solution. The concept of lifelong learning is central to modern workplace education. Organizations that encourage continuous professional development empower their employees to take ownership of their careers. Lifelong learning fosters curiosity, innovation, and self-motivation, enabling workers to pursue growth opportunities within and beyond their current roles. This empowerment contributes to higher job satisfaction, employee retention, and organizational loyalty.

Moreover, lifelong learning benefits organizations by nurturing a pipeline of skilled and adaptable talent. Employees who engage in continuous education are better equipped to assume leadership roles, drive innovation, and navigate complex challenges. By fostering a culture of lifelong learning, organizations position themselves as forward-thinking and capable of thriving in a dynamic global economy.

Advancements in technology have revolutionized the delivery of workplace education. Digital platforms, virtual reality, and artificial intelligence are transforming traditional training methods, making education more accessible, engaging, and effective. For example, VR-based training simulations allow employees to practice handling high-risk scenarios in a controlled environment, reducing the likelihood of accidents. Similarly, AI-driven learning platforms can personalize training modules to suit individual employees' needs and learning styles.

Online education platforms also enable remote learning, making training accessible to employees regardless of location. This flexibility is particularly valuable for organizations with geographically dispersed workforces. Additionally, e-learning tools can track progress and provide real-time feedback, ensuring that employees achieve measurable learning outcomes.

Pimmer and Pachler (2014) explore the potential of mobile learning (mLearning) in work-based education, emphasizing its ability to go beyond the simplistic adaptation of eLearning content for smaller screens. The chapter critiques traditional approaches, which often rely on behavioral and cognitive paradigms, and instead advocates for leveraging mobile devices to enable richer pedagogical strategies. The authors define mLearning as a dynamic process that facilitates learning across various contexts by bridging gaps

between different educational dimensions. They highlight five core aspects: (1) the creation and sharing of content, (2) learning for and at work, (3) integration of individual and social learning experiences, (4) education that spans formal and informal settings, and (5) adoption of situated, socio-cognitive, cultural, multimodal, and constructivist paradigms.

The Importance of Media Literacy Education at Workplace

Today digital media dominates personal and professional sphere and hence, the significance of media literacy has expanded beyond traditional educational contexts. Media literacy—the ability to critically evaluate and understand the influence of media—has become an essential skill for workplace environments, particularly in industries characterized by hazardous jobs. From construction and manufacturing to mining and logistics, employees are increasingly exposed to media narratives that can inadvertently glorify dangerous behaviors or create unrealistic perceptions of workplace practices. Integrating media literacy education into workplace training programs is crucial for promoting safety, mitigating risks, and fostering a culture of informed decision-making among workers.

The advent of social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube has amplified the visibility of workplace activities, often glamorizing high-risk behaviors. Song, Wang, Chen, Benitez, and Hu (2019) investigate the impact of social media usage in the workplace on team and employee performance, focusing on how work-oriented and socialization-oriented platforms complement one another. Conducted as a quasi-natural field experiment within a large financial services firm in China, the study compares two matched sample groups to assess performance outcomes. The findings reveal that work-oriented social media (e.g., DingTalk) and socialization-oriented platforms (e.g., WeChat) function as complementary resources. Work-oriented social media provide instrumental value by facilitating task management, information sharing, and coordination, while socialization-oriented platforms contribute expressive value by enhancing interpersonal communication and team cohesion. The synergy between these two types of platforms significantly improves team dynamics and

individual employee performance.

Viral videos showcasing extreme stunts, unsafe shortcuts, or competitive displays of skill can set harmful precedents, particularly in hazardous industries like construction or heavy machinery operation. Employees, particularly younger workers, may feel compelled to emulate these actions to gain recognition or validation among peers or on social media. For instance, a construction worker might record himself performing a complex task without safety equipment to demonstrate their expertise or courage. While this may garner attention online, it sets a dangerous example, normalizing non-compliance with safety protocols. Such trends highlight the urgent need for media literacy education, which equips employees with the critical thinking skills to question and resist media content that promotes unsafe practices.

Media literacy education creates critical thinking by teaching employees to analyze and interpret the intent, context, and implications of media messages. In hazardous workplaces, this skill is invaluable for distinguishing between responsible and irresponsible behaviors depicted online. Kharazmi and Mohammadi's (2020) research on media framing reveals how systematic narrative patterns can powerfully shape public perception and behavior. Their analysis demonstrates why workers need strong media literacy skills to identify and resist content that subtly normalizes unsafe workplace practices through selective presentation and emphasis. Workers trained in media literacy are less likely to be swayed by content that trivializes safety risks or exaggerates the benefits of risky actions.

For example, media literacy programs can educate employees about the potential consequences of emulating unsafe practices seen in videos. By contextualizing these behaviors within the framework of workplace safety policies, such training helps workers understand the real-world risks and liabilities involved. This informed perspective enables employees to make safer decisions, prioritizing long-term well-being over short-term recognition or social media validation.

Media literacy education contributes to a broader culture of safety by addressing the psychological and social dimensions of workplace behavior. Traditional safety training often focuses on technical knowledge and procedural compliance, but it may overlook the

influence of external factors such as media and peer pressure. Integrating media literacy into workplace education fills this gap, fostering a holistic approach to risk management.

For instance, a mining company might incorporate media literacy modules into its safety training program to educate workers about the dangers of engaging in or promoting unsafe activities on social media. These modules can include discussions about the ethical responsibility of representing workplace practices accurately and the potential repercussions of unsafe behavior, both for individuals and the organization. Such initiatives encourage employees to become advocates for safety, reinforcing a collective commitment to secure work environments.

The need for media literacy education is particularly pronounced in industries with inherently hazardous conditions. Construction, for example, is one of the most dangerous sectors, with high rates of workplace injuries and fatalities. Media narratives that romanticize risk-taking—such as working without harnesses at great heights—pose a direct threat to the safety of construction workers. Media literacy training can help employees critically assess such content, recognizing it as entertainment rather than an endorsement of best practices.

Similarly, in the transportation and logistics industry, drivers often encounter media content glorifying reckless driving or excessive workloads. Media literacy programs can educate workers about the importance of adhering to safety regulations, even when confronted with cultural or social pressures to "push limits." By empowering workers to critically evaluate such media influences, organizations can reduce accidents caused by risky behaviors.

In manufacturing, where automation and heavy machinery dominate, media literacy can address misconceptions about technology. Workers may encounter exaggerated claims about the capabilities of automated systems, leading to over-reliance on machinery and underestimation of human oversight requirements. Media literacy education ensures that employees maintain a balanced understanding of technological integration, recognizing both its advantages and limitations.

The proliferation of misinformation on digital platforms further underscores the need for media

literacy in workplaces. In hazardous industries, misinformation about safety practices, equipment standards, or regulatory changes can have severe consequences. For instance, a viral post claiming that a particular safety protocol is unnecessary could lead to widespread non-compliance among workers, increasing the likelihood of accidents. According to research by Sabbar and Hyun (2015), individuals place significantly higher trust in specialized industry sources compared to general media platforms when seeking technical information, highlighting the importance of providing workers with access to reliable, industry-specific safety resources rather than letting them rely on potentially misleading social media content.

Media literacy training equips employees with the skills to verify information and rely on credible sources. By teaching workers to identify reliable resources, such as official industry guidelines or regulatory body publications, organizations can prevent the spread of misinformation. This proactive approach not only enhances safety but also builds trust between employees and management, as workers feel confident in the accuracy of the information they receive.

Media literacy is not solely about resisting negative influences; it also empowers workers to use digital platforms responsibly and effectively. Employees trained in media literacy can become ambassadors for workplace safety, leveraging social media to share positive examples of safe practices. For example, a manufacturing worker might create a video demonstrating the proper use of safety equipment, promoting awareness among colleagues and the wider industry community.

Such positive media representation can have a ripple effect, inspiring other workers to prioritize safety and challenge harmful narratives. By encouraging responsible media engagement, organizations can harness the power of digital platforms to reinforce their safety culture and showcase their commitment to employee welfare.

Mardiani and Utami (2023) examine the role of online education in fostering employee empowerment within the context of Indonesia's e-commerce industry. Recognizing the increasing importance of empowerment in the digital era, the study investigates how online education programs contribute to enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, and

autonomy. Using a quantitative research approach, the authors collected survey data from 100 employees to evaluate perceptions of the impact of online education on their professional empowerment.

Their findings reveal that participants largely viewed online education as a positive factor in their empowerment. Specifically, it was associated with improvements in their ability to make autonomous decisions, adapt to digital tools, and contribute meaningfully to organizational goals.

The responsibility for integrating media literacy into workplace education lies primarily with employers and organizational leadership. Companies in hazardous industries must recognize the influence of media on employee behavior and take proactive steps to address it. This involves designing and implementing comprehensive media literacy programs as part of broader safety training initiatives.

Effective media literacy programs should be tailored to the specific needs of the industry and workforce. For example, a construction company might focus on debunking myths about shortcuts and emphasizing the importance of personal protective equipment (PPE). A logistics firm, on the other hand, might prioritize educating drivers about the risks of distracted driving and the importance of adhering to hours-of-service regulations.

In addition to formal training sessions, organizations can promote media literacy through internal communication channels, such as newsletters, workshops, and online resources. By embedding media literacy into the organizational culture, companies ensure that it becomes a continuous and integral part of their safety efforts.

Media Literacy as Hinderance for Dangerous Behaviors at Workplace

Social media's widespread adoption among younger demographics has transformed how individuals perceive, share, and engage with their daily lives, including their professional environments. In industries characterized by hazardous work, this phenomenon has introduced a new layer of complexity to workplace safety. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube offer a stage for workers to showcase their skills, creativity, or simply the extraordinary aspects of their jobs. However, this drive for recognition and spectacle often leads

workers in high-risk occupations to engage in dangerous behaviors that not only jeopardize their own lives but also endanger their colleagues and the broader workplace. In this context, media literacy emerges as a critical tool to counteract these tendencies, equipping workers with the ability to critically analyze the motivations and consequences of such actions while fostering a culture of responsibility and safety.

The allure of social media lies in its ability to amplify moments of excitement, danger, and skill, often turning mundane experiences into shareable and engaging content. Workers in hazardous jobs such as construction, logging, manufacturing, and mining find themselves uniquely positioned to capture content that showcases physical feats, high-stakes environments, or dramatic visuals. For example, a construction worker might record themselves balancing precariously on a beam at a great height or operating heavy machinery in unconventional ways. While these posts may garner likes, shares, and admiration, they often come at a significant cost—an increased risk of injury or even death.

This phenomenon is particularly pronounced among younger workers, who often exhibit a stronger inclination toward social media engagement. Studies indicate that younger demographics are more likely to seek validation and social capital through online interactions, making them vulnerable to the pressures of creating sensational content. Nosraty et al. (2020) demonstrate how this pursuit of social validation and adherence to idealistic standards can lead to health-compromising behaviors and psychological distress. Their findings parallel observations in hazardous workplaces, where the desire for social media recognition can lead workers to prioritize spectacular content over safety protocols, often resulting in serious consequences for their health and mental well-being. The pursuit of online visibility can lead to a normalization of risky behaviors, as these actions are rewarded with attention and approval from peers and followers. Consequently, social media's role as a digital stage inadvertently encourages workers to prioritize spectacle over safety.

You, Li, Li, and Xia (2019) investigate the factors contributing to the propagation of unsafe behavior among miners and propose strategies to control its spread within social networks in coal mines. Grounded in social learning theory, the study develops

a hypothetical model linking safety atmosphere, safety knowledge, influence degree of key figures, and unsafe behavior propagation (UBP). Data were collected through a survey of 433 miners, analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results reveal that safety knowledge serves as a mediator in the relationship between safety atmosphere and UBP. Additionally, the influence of key figures mediates the relationship between safety knowledge and UBP. A sequential mediation pathway was identified, in which safety atmosphere affects UBP through the combined mediating effects of safety knowledge and the influence degree of key figures.

The repercussions of unsafe behaviors driven by social media extend beyond individual workers. In workplaces where team coordination and shared responsibility are critical—such as construction sites, factories, or offshore oil rigs—the actions of one individual can have cascading effects. A worker attempting a risky maneuver for a social media post may inadvertently compromise the safety of others, either by creating hazardous conditions or diverting attention from essential tasks.

Ethically, the promotion of unsafe workplace practices on social media raises concerns about the responsibility of workers and organizations in curbing such behavior. While individuals bear personal accountability for their actions, employers also have a duty to foster an environment where safety takes precedence over external validation. Allowing or ignoring such behaviors not only undermines workplace safety but also sets a dangerous precedent that can influence others within the organization or industry.

Media literacy offers a powerful solution to the challenge of risky workplace behaviors fueled by social media. By teaching workers to critically evaluate the motivations, implications, and consequences of the content they consume and create, media literacy education equips them with the tools to resist the pressures of spectacle. This educational approach addresses the root causes of unsafe behaviors by fostering a deeper understanding of how social media dynamics can distort perceptions of risk and reward.

A comprehensive media literacy program tailored to hazardous workplaces would include the following components:

- Understanding Media Narratives: Workers

learn to recognize the constructed nature of social media content, understanding that viral videos often omit critical context, such as the risks or consequences of certain actions. This awareness helps demystify the glamour associated with risky behaviors.

- **Assessing Personal Motivations:** Media literacy encourages self-reflection, prompting workers to consider why they feel compelled to create or share certain types of content. This introspection can reveal the influence of peer pressure, the desire for validation, or misconceptions about social media's value.

- **Evaluating Consequences:** Workers are guided to think critically about the potential outcomes of their actions, both for themselves and others. This includes examining the legal, ethical, and safety implications of engaging in or promoting unsafe practices.

- **Promoting Ethical Media Engagement:** Media literacy education emphasizes the importance of using social media responsibly, encouraging workers to share content that reflects safe and ethical workplace practices. By fostering positive representation, workers can contribute to a culture that values safety and professionalism.

The implementation of media literacy education in hazardous workplaces offers numerous long-term benefits. Workers equipped with critical thinking skills are less likely to engage in dangerous behaviors, reducing the incidence of workplace accidents and injuries. This not only protects individual employees but also enhances overall organizational efficiency and morale.

Moreover, promoting responsible social media engagement can improve an organization's reputation. Companies that prioritize media literacy demonstrate a commitment to innovation and employee welfare, attracting talent and fostering loyalty among their workforce. Additionally, by addressing the influence of social media on workplace behaviors, organizations can stay ahead of emerging risks, positioning themselves as leaders in proactive safety management.

CONCLUSION

The growing tendency of workers to use social

media, and with the increase in the social media influence on workplace safety, there is a need for innovative approaches to risk management, particularly in hazardous industries. This study highlights the critical role of media literacy as a tool to counteract the normalization and glamorization of unsafe behaviors propagated through digital platforms. Social media's pervasive reach, coupled with its ability to reward spectacle, presents unique challenges for maintaining safety standards in workplaces. Workers, especially those in high-risk sectors such as construction and manufacturing, often face pressures to document and share their experiences, sometimes at the expense of safety protocols. Media literacy education, therefore, emerges as an essential intervention, equipping employees with the skills to critically evaluate the media they consume and produce while fostering a culture that prioritizes safety over social validation.

By integrating media literacy into workplace training programs, organizations can address the psychosocial dimensions of safety, empowering workers to resist external pressures and make informed decisions that protect themselves and their colleagues. This shift requires a proactive commitment from employers, who must recognize the influence of digital culture on workplace dynamics and invest in education that aligns with modern risks. The findings of this study advocate for media literacy as a cornerstone of contemporary risk management strategies, emphasizing its potential to reduce workplace incidents, enhance compliance with safety protocols, and ultimately save lives.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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