

**THE MODERATING EFFECT OF PERSONALITY TRAITS ON
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANAGEMENT
PRACTICES, LEADERSHIP STYLES AND SAFETY
PERFORMANCE IN IRAQ**

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By

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**Thesis Submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,
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ABSTRACT

Existing literature reveals a gap in the empirical knowledge on safety performance in the oil and gas (O&G) industry in Iraq. This study specifically aims to identify the level of safety performance in the Iraqi O&G industry by examining the direct relationship among management practices (safety training, rewards, management commitment, communication and feedback, hiring practices, and employee participation), leadership styles (transformational and transactional), and safety performance (compliance with safety behavior and safety participation) among 713 employees. This study also explores the role of personality traits (extraversion, conscientiousness, intellect, agreeableness, and emotional stability) as a moderator of the relationship among management practices, leadership styles, and safety performance. Quantitative data were processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science version 18.0, which includes descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and Pearson correlation. Additionally, multiple regression and hierarchical multiple regressions were used to test the study hypotheses. In identifying interaction effects, significant beta coefficients and post hoc probing by split sample analysis were employed. Results provide general support for the hypothesis of the study, despite a number of differences in the direction of the relationships. Specifically, training, rewards, management commitment, communication and feedback, hiring practices, employee participation, and the transactional leadership style positively related to safety performance, whereas the transformational leadership style did not significantly relate to safety performance. The results also suggest that personality traits have a positive and significant moderating influence on the model. The relationship among management practices, leadership styles, and safety performance indicates that the improvement of safety performance through the management of employees will be beneficial to the Iraqi O&G industry. Finally, this study discusses theoretical and practical implications, as well as recommendations for future research.

Keywords: management practices, leadership styles, safety performance, personal traits, oil and gas industry

ABSTRAK

Karya ilmiah yang sedia ada jelas menunjukkan wujudnya lompong dalam pengetahuan empiris tentang prestasi keselamatan dalam industri minyak dan gas di Iraq. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti tahap prestasi keselamatan dalam industri minyak dan gas di Iraq. Penelitian kajian ialah untuk menyiasat hubungan secara langsung antara amalan pengurusan (latihan keselamatan, ganjaran, komitmen pengurusan, komunikasi dan maklum balas, amalan pengambilan, dan penglibatan pekerja), gaya kepemimpinan (transformasional dan transaksional) dan prestasi keselamatan (kepatuhan terhadap gelagat keselamatan dan penglibatan keselamatan) dalam kalangan 713 orang pekerja. Kajian ini juga meneliti peranan ciri-ciri personaliti (ekstraversi, sifat berhati-hati, intelek, bersetuju, dan kestabilan emosi) sebagai moderator hubungan antara amalan pengurusan, gaya kepemimpinan, dan prestasi keselamatan. Data kuantitatif diproses dengan menggunakan *Statistical Package Statistik for Social Science versi 18.0*. Ini melibatkan statistik deskriptif, analisis faktor, dan korelasi Pearson. Di samping itu, regresi berbilang dan hierarki digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Bagi mengenal pasti kesan interaksi, pekali beta yang signifikan dan *post hoc probing* digunakan dengan memecahkan analisis sampel. Secara umumnya, dapatan kajian menyokong hipotesis kajian walaupun terdapat beberapa perbezaan dalam haluan hubungan. Secara khususnya, latihan, ganjaran, komitmen pengurusan, komunikasi dan maklum balas, amalan pengambilan, penglibatan pekerja, dan gaya kepemimpinan transaksional berhubung secara positif dengan prestasi keselamatan. Sementara itu, gaya kepemimpinan transformasional tidak berkaitan secara signifikan dengan prestasi keselamatan. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa ciri-ciri personaliti mempunyai pengaruh mengawal yang positif dan signifikan dalam model kajian. Hubungan antara amalan pengurusan, gaya kepemimpinan, dan prestasi keselamatan menunjukkan bahawa penambahbaikan prestasi keselamatan melalui pengurusan pekerja akan mendatangkan manfaat kepada industri minyak dan gas Iraq. Akhirnya, kajian ini membincangkan implikasi teoritis dan praktis. Ini termasuklah cadangan bagi kajian akan datang.

Kata kunci: amalan pengurusan, gaya kepemimpinan, prestasi keselamatan, ciri-ciri personaliti, industri minyak dan gas

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

As the world continues its voyage toward modernization, it faces tremendous challenges, specifically in the 21st century. The rapid growth of the global industry has raised concerns on safety and health in the workplace, as an increasing number of occupational accidents and injuries frequently make headline news (OHS, 2010). An occupational accident is defined as an occurrence arising from the course of work, which results in non-fatal or fatal injury (Papazoglou, Aneziris, Konstandinidou, & Giakoumatos, 2009). In addition, an occupational accident is unexpected and unplanned, and can result in one or more workers incurring a personal injury, disease, or death (Visser *et al.*, 2007). Some of the worst occupational accidents over the years include the Flixborough explosion at a chemical plant in the United Kingdom on 1 June 1974, which killed 28 people and seriously injured 89 others (Vaidogas & Juocevius, 2008). Two years after the Flixborough explosion, an occupational accident occurred in a chemical factory in Seveso, Italy on 10 July 1976, which resulted in the death of 37,000 people and in the hospitalization of 2,000 others (Sluka, 2009). Another accident occurred in Bhopal, India on 3 December 1984, killing 1,000 people. This accident in India caused major injuries and health-related problems because of leakage of methyl isocyanate chemicals (Broughton, 2005; Gassert & Dhara, 2005; Skjerve, 2008). In 1986, another horrible accident occurred in Ukraine, Soviet Union, that is, the unforgettable explosion at the Chernobyl reactor. A total of 58 people died, including 30 firemen. Over 2,000 people,

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