

# A Tracer Study on Occupational Safety and Health Center-led Basic Occupational Safety and Health (BOSH) Training Participants from January 2016 to December 2018

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# **A Tracer Study on Occupational Safety and Health Center –Led Basic Occupational Safety and Health (BOSH) Training Participants from January 2016 to December 2018**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

Tracer studies are common tools for research in educational and training programs. The assessment tests done help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the programs being measured. Most institutions use the results of tracer studies as basis to improve education and training programs as well as enhance the learning experiences of future learners. This is an approach that is being used widely by different organizations most especially in educational institutions. The primary consideration is to monitor their students once graduated from their institution which results to follow up of graduates as to what extent did they apply their acquired knowledge. The aim is to evaluate a person's development and progress up until the person is employed. In effect, tracer studies assess the quality of graduates as affected by their training or education (Lange, 2001). Furthermore, tracer studies are seen as an effective tool in monitoring and planning of training programs. It is a simple tool designed to measure the relevance of a training program. Documenting and collecting feedback from the graduates of a training program greatly help in improving project planning; revise and reinforce interventions as well as demonstrate results towards improving public confidence in the training program. (Macchi, et al, 2009)

The Occupational Safety and Health Center (OSHC) of the Department of Labor and Employment, mandated to plan, develop and implement training programs in the field of occupational safety and health in the Philippines, have employed tracer studies to evaluate and monitor one of its training programs specifically the 5-day mandatory Basic Occupational Safety and Health (BOSH) Training for Safety Officers. To date, there were two tracer studies done. The first tracer study was done by M.R. Tubelonia , et. al in 2002 which aimed to aid in improving the BOSH training program of the OSHC. In 2016, a follow up study was conducted by R.M. Sta Ana, et al which aimed to determine the extent of application of knowledge gained by the participants in the training program. The results of which also served as bases in improving the training program.

Taking into account the findings of the studies done by Tubelonia, et al. and Sta. Ana, et al., respectively, the OSHC have revised the modules of the BOSH to ensure that the expected skills of the trainees are obtained. The advent of R.A. 11058 in 2018 contributed to the further revision of the modules. This research will further look into the observations identified by the tracer studies done by Tubelonia, et al in 2002 and Sta. Ana, et al in 2016, respectively.

## **II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

This study aimed to determine the extent to which the knowledge and skills gained by participants are applied after completing the 5-day mandatory BOSH training during the period of CY 2016-2018.

## **III. METHODOLOGY:**

A descriptive approach using both qualitative and quantitative data was used to attain the objectives. An on-line survey method using self-administered structured questionnaire using Google Forms was utilized in a two-phased data collection process which spanned from February 2020 to September 2020. The questionnaire focused on information pertaining to: a) Demographic profile of respondents including their respective company profiles; b) Knowledge gained from the BOSH training and how the respondents applied the knowledge they gained; c) Facilitating and hindering factors that influenced the application of knowledge gained; d) Effects of the training on the current employment of respondents; and e) Improvements that the respondents did in their workplaces influenced by the knowledge gained from the training. There were 3,161 prospective respondents of the study with 1,184 valid participants identified of which 457 have responded with a 38.60% response rate.

## **IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:**

Results showed that the BOSH training was well received by the respondents. Majority have assessed that the BOSH training was generally successful and have met its objectives. The most knowledge gained were from topics that were perceived to have discernible information that respondents comprehend and understand which translated to more in-depth application of the learnings as opposed to concepts that were seen to be too technical. It was noted that BOSH topics that had highly technical concepts are important components in capacitating safety officers in the performance of hazards identification, risk assessment and control. The facilitating and hindering factors that affect the application of knowledge from the training were not influenced by company size. The realization of the importance of improving OSH practices in the

workplace was the primary observed positive effect of the BOSH trainings to respondents. Diversely, it was observed that the BOSH training did not have much impact on the improvement to perform monitoring and evaluation of OSH programs and that most respondents did not pursue advanced trainings in OSH to further improve their capability and competency in practicing OSH. These reinforced the observation that most respondents underwent BOSH training just to comply with DOLE requirements. It was also noted that the change in the structure and focus of the BOSH module was done by the Occupational Safety and Health Center in 2019 to increase the competency of safety officers in formulating needs-based OSH programs to comply with the requirements of the RA 11058. The determination of the impact of the change in module structure is not in the purview of this study. This study also showed that most respondents have non-OSH personnel functions at present and most did not pursue DOLE accreditation as an OSH practitioner.

#### **V. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Considering the results shown by this study, the following recommendations include: 1) Review of BOSH Topics that were considered to have elicited low learnings and restructure them to provide more discernible information; 2) The OSHC to explore the possibility of inclusion to the BOSH training the following: a) Establish a system to discern the qualifications of prospective BOSH trainees and addition of an internship curriculum as part of the training to ensure that knowledge application from the training is standardized and will further equip the trainees with practical aspects of the training and b) Information that would promote and explain the advantages and benefits of being a DOLE Accredited OSH practitioner to give would-be OSH practitioners encouragement on improvement of their capability and accountability in their OSH practice; and 3) Conduct of a tracer study among trainees who underwent BOSH training under the new module implemented by the OSHC.