

The Social Status of Dock Workers at Malabon City, Philippines

Lorna R. Dimatatac, Technological Institute of the Philippines, The Philippines
Ray Byron R. Dimatatac, Technological Institute of the Philippines, The Philippines
Engr. Marcelo M. Yarte, Technological Institute of the Philippines, The Philippines

The Asian Conference on Arts & Humanities 2018
Official Conference Proceedings

Abstract

The objectives of this study were to determine the dock workers' social status, their problems encountered, difficulties in workplace, working conditions, and benefits received from the management of the company. The respondents of this study were 50 dock workers consisting of male and female at Malabon City, Philippines. All of them are regular workers with a salary range of Php 11,000.00 - Php 15,000.00 per month.

The results revealed that 42% of the dock workers aged from 26 to 30 years old. Ninety-two percent were male while only 8% were female. As to their socio-economic status, all of them were in poverty line. Based on the data gathered 30% out of 50 respondents experienced machinery hazard, 26% of them experienced fire and explosions, 14% lack of knowledge in work, and 16% experienced unnecessary diseases. In addition, the respondents received benefits such as: sick leave, paid holidays, compensation benefits, disability pension, 13th month pay and Christmas bonus. All the respondents said that bad weather is one of the difficulties encountered in workplace, 60% out 50 respondents experienced tough work environment, and 58% no teamwork from their co-worker.

Keywords: Dock Workers, Dock Industry, Social Status

iafor

The International Academic Forum
www.iafor.org

Introduction

The dock industry is an important link in the transport of cargoes that needs continuous improvement in order to meet the demands of international trade. The growing transport volume, the increasing sophistication of infrastructure, the widespread use of containers, and the intensity of capital investment required for the development of dock activities have led to insightful transformations in the sector (International Labor Standard on Dock Workers, © 1996-2018 International Labor Organization (ILO)).

Those who are engaged in loading and unloading of ships and vessels in public docks or in places used by the public (container yards, sheds or warehouses) are called as Dock Workers (Maritime Ports Code). The concept of dock work is defined by the Royal Decree as all handling of cargoes transported by seagoing ship or inland shipping, by railway wagon or lorry, ancillary services relating to such cargoes, whether the activities take place in the docks, on navigable waterways, quays or in firms engaged in the import, export and transit of cargoes, and any handling of cargoes carried by seagoing ship or inland shipping to and from the quays of industrial establishments (Belgium: Royal Decree of 12 January 1973 (s. 1)).

Dock worker responsibilities have a higher risk to accident and dangerous in nature (Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152); Philippines: Safety and Health Standards in Dock Work adopted on 19 April 1985 (s. 1). Addition, the heavy work and manual lifting of cargoes to transfer in the ship and vice versa affect the health of the dock workers' body especially the shoulders, legs and arms. In addition, the Dock workers are exposed to excessive use of muscle strength (Valdecir, C. et al 2014).

Furthermore, conditions that shipyard jobs offer are not only uncomfortable but also dangerous to the dock workers' health. The nature of their job requires them to be available at all times. They have always a risk of slipping or falling down several feet (Stogsdill, S., 2016).

The use of the new technology like hydraulic crane is a great help to reduce the risk of accident. The modernization through the use of heavy equipment and new technology makes the job of dock workers easier and faster. However, unindustrialized countries are in difficult situation to finance the development of sophisticated ports. ILO standards help address these challenges by dealing with two peculiarities of dock work: the need for specific protection due to safety and health hazards to which dockworkers are exposed during their work, and the impact of technological progress and international trade on their employment and the organization of work in ports. (International Labor Standard on Dock Workers, © 1996-2018 International Labor Organization (ILO)).

There are 8 main hazards faced by the Dock workers such as: Working Conditions, Timings, Machinery Hazard, Slips and falls, Fires and explosions, cramped spaces and high pressure, Asbestosis and mesothelioma, Improper knowledge. Shipyard workers are those working in some of the most risky working environments. This not only adds to the problems of their job but actually they need a constant caution. Dock worker, as a shipyard worker, is not simple or easy (Marine Insight, 2016).

According to Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention (1979), dock works cover all and any part of the work of loading or unloading in any ship as well as any work incidental thereto; the definition of such work shall be established by national law or

practice. This convention requires ratifying states to take measures with a view to provide and maintain workplaces, equipment and methods of work that are safe and without risk of injury to health; providing and maintaining safe means of access to any workplace; providing information, training and supervision necessary to ensure protection of workers against risks to accident or injury to health at work; providing workers with personal protective equipment and clothing and any life-saving appliances reasonably required; providing and maintaining suitable and adequate first-aid and rescue facilities; and developing and establishing proper procedures for emergency situations which may arise.

Likewise, the memorandum of understanding between the Health and Safety Executive (HSA) and Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) provides that each party has its own obligation and responsibility in case the dock workers suffer injury and worst death (HSE, 2003).

The respiratory health of 118 dock workers who load grain cargoes in the ports of Vancouver and Prince Rupert was compared with that of 555 grain elevator workers in the same regions and the 128 civic workers were used as an unexposed control group (Dimich-Ward, H. et al. 1995). It was found out that the occurrences of chronic cough and phlegm were high in dock workers than the elevator workers.

In addition, the symptoms of eye and skin irritation were high every month for the dock workers. Average percentage of the predicted FEV1 and FVC for dock workers (mean 100.6% and 105.3% respectively) were the same to the civic workers but significantly higher than those elevator workers. Often exposures to grain dust were related to lower values of FEV1 but changes in chronic respiratory symptoms were observable.

The study of Vaz, C. et.al, (2014) helped to understand that changes in dock worker conditions are essential which gives human limitations in performing their tasks. In this study, the profile of diseases and injuries were identified, and how it affects the dock workers and their perceptions of positive and negative work influences on their health. It was concluded that the diagnoses obtained are related to dock work perceptions, and initiated to introduce the safety measures.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents as to their Age

Age	Total	Percentage
46 years above	1	2%
41- 45	3	6%
36- 40	5	10%
31- 35	7	14%
26- 30	21	42%
21- 25	12	24%
15- 20	1	2%
TOTAL	50	100%

Table 1 shows that 1 or 2% of the respondents were from 46 years old and above, 3 or 6% from 41-45 years old, 5 or 10% were from 36-40 years old, 7 or 14% were from 31-35 years

old, 21 or 42% were from 26-30 years old, 12 or 24% from 21-25 years old, and 1 or 2% from 15- 20 years old which have a total of 100 percent.

Table 1.1 Profile of the Respondents as to their Gender

Gender	Total	Percentage
Male	46	92%
Female	4	8%
TOTAL	50	100%

Table 1.1 reveals that 46 or 92% of the Dock workers were male because their job is high risk and dangerous, while 4 or 8% of them were female.

Table 1. 2 Profile of the Respondents as to their Marital Status

Marital Status	Total	Percentage
Single, never married	34	68%
Married/ Domestic Partnership	21	42%
Widowed	3	6%
Separated	2	4%
TOTAL	50	100%

Table 1.2 shows the respondents' marital status. Thirty-four or 68% were single, while 21 or 42% were married, 3 or 6% were widowed, and 2 or 4% were separated. As observed, majority of them were single because their works are difficult that their salary is not enough for their needs.

Table 1.3 Profile of the Respondents as to their Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	Total	Percentage
College	33	66%
High School	13	26%
Elementary	4	8%
TOTAL	50	100%

In Table 1.3 reveals that 33 or 66% of the respondents were in college level, while 13 or 26% were high school level, and 4 or 8% of them finished elementary level. This implies that there is a mismatch with the job and the educational attainment of some Dock Workers due to lack of job or they need to work to support their families.

Table 1.4 Profile of the Respondents as to their Employment Status

Employment Status	Total	Percentage
Regular	50	100%
TOTAL	50	100%

Table 1.4 shows that 50 or 100% of the respondents were all regular employees.

Table 1.5 Profile of the Respondents as to their Socio-Economic Status

Low Income	Total	Percentage
Php 11, 000- Php 15, 000	50	100%
TOTAL	50	100%

Table 1.5 discloses the monthly income of the respondents is from Php11, 000 - Php15, 000 considered as low income. However, according to them, they strengthen their income in order to meet their day to day expenses.

Table 2. Profile of the Respondents as to their Working Conditions

Working Conditions	5-Strong Agree		3-Neutral		1-Strongly Disagree		Total	
	AN	P	AN	P	AN	P	TN	TP
Physically Exhausting	49	98%	0	0%	1	2%	50	100%
Dangerous	22	44%	0	0%	28	56%	50	100%
Stressful	22	44%	7	14%	21	42%	50	100%
Monotonous	21	42%	1	2%	28	56%	50	100%

Legends:

AN - Actual Number

P- Percentage

TN - Total Number

TP - Total Percentage

5 - Strongly Agree

3 - Neutral

1- Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows that 49 or 98% of them strongly agree that their job is physically exhausting while only 1 or 2% strongly disagree, 22 or 44% strongly agree that their work is dangerous, and only 28 or 56% out 50 respondents strongly disagree. In addition, 22 or 44% strongly agree that dock working is stressful, 7 or 14 % were neutral, and 21 or 42% of them disagree. Twenty-one or 42% of them strongly agree that their work is monotonous, only 1 or 2% is neutral, while majority of them strongly disagree.

Table 3. Problems encountered by the Respondents in the Dock Facility

Problems	5-Strongly Agree		1-Strongly Disagree		Total	
	AN	P	AN	P	TN	TP
Machinery Hazard	15	30%	35	70%	50	100%
Fires and explosions	13	26%	37	74%	50	100%
Improper knowledge	7	14%	43	86%	50	100%
Overweight Containers	7	14%	43	86%	50	100%
Undeclared Containers	6	12%	44	88%	50	100%
Occupational Diseases	8	16%	42	84%	50	100%

Legends:

AN - Actual Number

P - Percentage

TN - Total Number

TP - Total Percentage

5 - Strongly Agree

1 - Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows that 15 or 30% of the respondents strongly agree that their work is Machinery Hazardous while 35 or 70% strongly disagree. In addition, 13 or 26 % strongly agree that one of their problems is fire and explosions, while 37 or 74% out of 50 respondents strongly disagree. Seven or 14% of them strongly agree that they have improper knowledge, while 43 or 86% strongly disagree. It simply signifies that the respondents are properly oriented with the nature of their work. Furthermore, 7 or 14% of them strongly agree that one of their problems is overweight containers while 43 or 86% strongly disagree as to the existence of overweight containers. Only 6 or 12% strongly agree that another problem they have encountered is the undeclared containers, and 44 or 88% respondents strongly disagree. Moreover, 8 or 16% strongly agree that another problem of the respondents is the occupational diseases; however 42 or 84% out 50 strongly disagree.

Table 4. Benefits of the Dock Workers

Benefits	5-Strongly Agree		1-Strongly Disagree		Total	
	AN	P	AN	P	AN	P
Paid Holidays off	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Free Life Insurance	0	0%	50	100%	50	100%
Compensation benefits	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Sick leave	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Rehabilitation allowance	0	0%	50	100%	50	100%
Disability pension	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Unemployment benefit	0	0%	50	100%	50	100%
13th Month Pay	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Christmas Bonus	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Other benefits	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%

Legends:

AN - Actual Number

P - Percentage

TN - Total Number

TP - Total Percentage

5 - Strongly Agree

1 - Strongly Disagree

Table 4 shows that 50 or 100% of the respondents strongly agree that they are paid during holidays. In terms of free insurance all of them strongly disagree. This means that their companies are not giving them free insurance. Likewise, all of them received compensation benefits, sick leave, but as to rehabilitation allowance 50 or all of them strongly disagree. All of them received disability pension, 13th month pay, Christmas Bonus, and other benefits except unemployment benefit.

Table 5. Difficulties of a Dock Worker

Difficulties	5-Strongly Agree		1-Strongly Disagree		Total	
	AN	P	AN	P	AN	P
Bad weather	50	100%	0	0%	50	100%
Tough work environment	30	60%	20	40%	50	100%
No teamwork from other workers	29	58%	21	42%	50	100%

Legends:

AN - Actual Number

P - Percentage

TN - Total Number

TP - Total Percentage

5 - Strongly Agree

1 - Strongly Disagree

Table 5 reveals that all respondents strongly agree that bad weather is one of their difficulties encountered in the workplace. In addition, 30 or 60% strongly agree that tough work environment is another difficulty to them, while only 20 or 40% of them strongly disagree. In addition, 29 or 58% strongly agree that they have no teamwork, while 21 or 42% out of 50 respondents strongly disagree.

It is concluded that all the respondents belong to poverty line as indicated in their salary range. Although they received a lot of benefits but their salary is not enough for their daily expenses. The tremendous changes in the environment and the fast phasing of technology make some of the Dock Workers' job easy and comfortable.

Acknowledgement

A heartfelt gratitude to those individuals who helped to make this study possible:

To the Dock workers for being cooperative in answering the survey questionnaire;

To our co-researchers, the Echo Group for their support and cooperation during the data collection;

To Engr. Gerald A. Rabanal for his helped during the finalization of this research study;

Lorna, Ray and
Marcelo

References

Belgium: Royal Decree of 12 January 1973 (s. 1).

Cao, X. Meng, Q. (2016). Dockworkers' Resistance and Union Reform within China's Globalized Seaport Industry. Published online. p. 272-284.

Cezar-Vaz, M., De Almeida, M., Bonow, C., Rocha, L., Borges, A., de Oliveira Severo, L. (2012). Non-communicable diseases diagnosed in a health care service for dock workers: a case study in a seaport of Brazil. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*. Vol. 3, No. 6. pp. 25-42.

Cezar-Vaz, M.R., de Almeida, M.C.V., Bonow, C.A., Rocha, L.P., Borges, A.M., & Piexak, D.R. (2014). Casual Dock Work: Profile of Diseases and Injuries and Perception of Influence on Health. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 11(2), 2077-2091.

C152 - Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152)
Convention concerning Occupational Safety and Health in Dock Work (Entry into force: 05 Dec 1981) Adoption: Geneva, 65th ILC session (25 Jun 1979) - Status: Up-to-date instrument (Technical Convention).

International Labor Standards. © 1996-2018 International Labour Organization (ILO)
Costa, Valdecir, Souza, Katia, Reis, Teixeira, Liliane Reis, Hedlund, Charles Jopar, Fernandes Filho, Luiz Antonio, & Cardoso, Leticia Silveira. (2015). Health and Labour from the perspective of Railway Dock workers in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil. *Ciência & Saúde Coletiva*, 20(4), 1207-1216.

David, B. (1998). Child dockworkers used to break a union in Mindanao.

Dimich-Ward, H. D., Kennedy, S. M., Dittrick, M. A., DyBuncio, A., & Chan-Yeung, M. (1995). Evaluation of the respiratory health of dock workers who load grain cargoes in British Columbia. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 52(4), 273–278.

HSE (2003). Memorandum of Understanding Between the Health and Safety Executive.

Marine Insight (2016). 8 Main Hazards Faced by Shipyard Workers.

Marta Regina Cezar-Vaz, 1. M. (2014). Casual Dock Work: Profile of Diseases and Injuries and Perception of Influence on Health. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*, 2077–2091.

Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152)

Philippines: Safety and Health Standards in Dock Work adopted on 19 April 1985 (s. 1).

Stogsdill, S. (2016). Man drowns while working on dock at Grand Lake. *NewsOK*.