ABSTRACT

This case study aimed to propose improvements to workers of a small drugstore in the city of Brasilia, Brazil. The Ergonomic Work Analysis (EWA) was chosen as methodology. There was not any request by the employer for any specific approach, and because of a lack of complaints to guide the study, the starting point was from data obtained through observation and application of an interview and a questionnaire, both semi-structure, for choice of ergonomic sub-areas that should be analyzed. Such data collection instruments contained questions related to the task and the activity of each employee whose data revealed problems related to the various sub-areas of ergonomics, and a predominance of physical problems. According to the observation it was possible to identify a poor distribution of hourly load between the workers in the different shifts and layout issues. As for the activity, through interview and questionnaire, a lack of adequate training for the sales area and for the pharmaceutical area was identified. In addition, a lack of a clear definition of responsibilities was noticed and consequently job function irregularities. An internal conflict arising from dissatisfaction with the leadership / employer due to non-payment of previously agreed bonuses, absence of rest breaks, and moral harassment issues were also observed. With regards to the physical aspects of problems there were such inappropriate reception desk leading to poor posture, excessive squats, too much effort to reach products on high shelves, overhead weight, and excessive standing time during the working day. It turned out that not even the fulfillment of the Brazilian legislation was in force, both with respect to meal breaks and rest, concerning the Regulatory Standard 17 (NR 17) in relation to Ergonomics. Through the Development of a TDF - Task Distribution Framework it was possible to detail the issues ace worker complaints as the offset function and work overload. Specific data collection instrument of the Ergonomics area used the Ergolândia Software, version 5.0, specifically the REBA method - Rapid Entire Body Assessment. We also used the NIOSH method (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health). There was a literature to support improvements and proposals, having cared to seek similar basis and current research, of scientifically recognized researchers. As the main suggestions for improvement indicated the adoption of principles of Correction Ergonomics. Despite the fact that the related improvements are known to workers they can object to the proposed changes, so we had to be careful in suggesting the adoption of empowerment to minimize resistance to such changes and to implement them gradually. Whereas the studied company is a branch that deals with health issues it means that such improvements are extremely important as they not only favor the workers but also indirectly benefit the public that would have more motivated and skilled attendants. The reality found in this study was that there are various forms of disrespect at this branch regarding legal aspects, not only with regard to ergonomic issues but also on the technical issues of the pharmaceutical industry, such as the failure on the mandatory full time presence of a pharmaceutical in the workplace. This failure shows that there is a lack of adequate inspection, and highlights the lack of knowledge of the owners about the existing legislation. The lack of knowledge is not only restricted to the normative question but also to the lack of knowledge in the business management area and especially in people management. A clear lack of motivation was noticeable in the employees, who seemed to be working only for financial reasons, not being able to see any sense in their function. The aforementioned creates serious problems in interpersonal relationships, the company revenue and to the health of everyone involved. In conclusion, we realized that the greatest facilitators and contributors of this work were the staff. Ergonomics aims to adapt the work to the worker; this means that small changes in the management, environment and relationships would make a big difference not
only for employees but also for the owner of the commercial establishment that would benefit from the increased productivity.