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Evaluating the Interplay of Compensation Equity, Job Security, Presenteeism, and Work Enthusiasm in The Perception of Occupational Safety and Health Risks in the Estonian Workforce

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Compensation equity, Estonian
workforce, Job security,
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Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) risks are of growing concern globally, including in Estonia. Understanding the contributing factors to these risks is crucial for effective management and intervention. This study aimed to assess the interplay of compensation equity, job security, presenteeism, and work enthusiasm in the perception of occupational safety and health risks within the Estonian workforce. Using data from Eurofound's European Working Conditions Telephone Survey (EWCTS) 2021, the study computed association metrics and employed exhaustive Chi-square Automatic Interaction Detection (CHAID) techniques. The analysis yielded several noteworthy findings. Specifically, increased OSH risks were positively correlated with elevated levels of presenteeism. Moreover, these perceptions of risk were found to have a negative effect on feelings of fair compensation. Job insecurity was identified as a contributing factor to higher perceptions of OSH risks. Work enthusiasm was positively associated with higher rates of presenteeism but negatively related to perceptions of fair compensation. Lastly, the perception of job insecurity negatively affected feelings of fair compensation. The findings from this study contribute to the existing literature by offering an integrated perspective on how job security, presenteeism, work enthusiasm, and compensation equity collectively shape perceptions of OSH risks. Importantly, the results emphasise the necessity of considering occupational safety and health risks in the broader context of compensation equity and job security. Additionally, the study advocates for special attention to be given to managing work enthusiasm in order to mitigate the unintended consequence of elevated presenteeism.

The modern global landscape highlights the need for a nuanced understanding of the human factors influencing industrial workspaces, particularly those related to occupational safety and health. This field has become a matter of paramount importance not only in Western nations but also in emerging European nations such as Estonia, where it has become a crucial societal concern following the country's transition since regaining independence (Jarvis & Tint, 2009). In certain contexts of development, the increased emphasis on labour protection has surpassed other urgent concerns, such as social and human rights issues, indicating its heightened importance in public discourse (Joamets & Luukas, 2016; Tint, 1998). Nonetheless, this emphasis on OSH is profoundly intertwined with a complex web of organisational factors, such as the precarious nature of job security, the pervasive culture of presenteeism, and evolving perspectives on equitable compensation. These factors have cumulatively contributed to the weakening of social safety nets, led corporations to retreat from their traditional roles in ensuring employee well-being, and even resulted in the downscaling or dissolution of departments specifically designated for labour protection, thereby relegating them to the periphery as fringe services (Bohle et al., 2001; Jarvis & Tint, 2009; Laberge & Ledoux, 2011; Tamers et al., 2020).

Recent research (Landstad et al., 2022) suggests that organisations often lack a deep understanding of occupational safety and health management, highlighting the need for more comprehensive OSH education and awareness-raising. Such minimisation is frequently attributed to deficiencies in current personnel management systems that extend from individual enterprises to broader employment services, compounded by a general lack of specialised social and psychological support mechanisms within organisations (Eerd et al., 2021). Further complicating the matter is Estonia's membership in the European Union (EU), a factor that brings its own set of standards and expectations around labour safety. Research (Carraher, 2011; Kaarna et al., 2004) illuminate this by revealing that a substantial majority of workers regard safe working conditions and reasonable compensation as indispensable factors for a fulfilling work environment, thereby elevating OSH from a matter of individual preference to a collective necessity intrinsically linked to the well-being of the entire nation. In this particular setting, research in this field holds significant value.

Despite the escalating importance and complexity of these issues, there is a conspicuous lack of comprehensive research specifically examining the interconnected nature of factors like job security, work enthusiasm, presenteeism, and compensation equity, especially within the unique socio-economic context of Estonia. Existing research in this Baltic state is still in its infancy and largely fragmented, focusing on these issues in isolation rather than as an integrated system that shapes perceptions of OSH risks (Joamets & Luukas, 2016). Consequently, this study seeks to address this gap in the academic literature by posing the research question: How do factors such as compensation equity, job security, presenteeism, and work enthusiasm affect the perception of occupational safety and health risks among the Estonian workforce?

Estonia offers a particularly interesting backdrop for this study due to its dynamic labour market and complex historical legacies. Following its independence in 1991, Estonia underwent a rapid economic transformation, including privatisation and the establishment of a market economy (Jarvis & Tint, 2009). Such a transition brought about significant changes in the Estonian labour market, such as new forms of employment and diverse job roles. Furthermore, Estonia's integration into the European Union brought the necessity of aligning its labour

regulations, including occupational safety and health standards, with European norms (Joamets & Luukas, 2016).

Post-independence and post-EU membership, the Estonian labour market has seen considerable shifts, which include an increase in the service sector and a decrease in traditional manufacturing roles, which affect the types of OSH risks that workers in Estonia face (Jarvis & Tint, 2009). For instance, while physical safety risks may have been reduced in some sectors, psychosocial risks related to job security, work enthusiasm, presenteeism, and compensation equity may come into focus. Moreover, Estonia has become a magnet for digital nomads and remote workers due to its e-residency programme and the digital-first approach of its government. Such a new category of workers brings additional dimensions to the concept of OSH in the Estonian context. For instance, remote work and gig work can lead to blurred work-life boundaries, adding psychosocial stressors that may not be immediately recognised as OSH risks. The country also has an ageing workforce, a trend that poses unique challenges to OSH management. Older workers may face age-related physical and cognitive changes, and their perceptions of job security and compensation equity may differ from their younger counterparts, thereby requiring specialised OSH interventions.

Estonia's historical experiences under Soviet rule may also still influence workplace dynamics and perceptions around job security and fairness in compensation. The Soviet era's legacy, where job security was often guaranteed, but economic incentives were limited, might continue to shape how Estonians view their roles and rights within the workplace, including their perceptions of OSH risks (Jarvis & Tint, 2009). Contemporary Estonia's OSH policies have been increasingly aligned with European Union standards, focusing more on proactive measures such as risk assessments than merely reactive ones like accident reporting. However, implementation and compliance levels can vary across industries and company sizes. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), which make up a significant portion of the Estonian economy, may find it particularly challenging to meet these standards due to resource constraints. These unique aspects of the Estonian context—rapid modernization, demographic changes, historical legacies, and evolving employment forms—make it critical to understand the multifaceted influences on perceptions of OSH risks. These insights will be invaluable for policymakers and human resource professionals as they strive to address the complex, intersecting factors influencing occupational safety and health in Estonia.

In actuality, the anticipated significance of this research is manifold. Firstly, it aims to substantially enrich the academic discourse on OSH by offering a targeted investigation into the dynamic interplay of these specific factors within the rapidly evolving Estonian workforce. Secondly, this study aspires to generate data-driven insights that could serve as valuable resources for employers and fellow researchers in Estonia, thereby enabling the formulation of precise strategies aimed at enhancing workplace health, safety, and overall productivity.

Literature Review

Conceptual Overview

Occupational safety and health has been the subject of meticulous examination across a myriad of academic disciplines, ranging from psychology and public health to human resource management, thereby underlining its multidimensional nature that encompasses both physical and psychological aspects of well-being (Zanko & Dawson, 2011). While early studies

predominantly focused on tangible factors, such as environmental and physical hazards, a noticeable shift towards more nuanced psychosocial factors such as job security, stress, and burnout has been observed in contemporary research, creating a broader, more inclusive framework for understanding OSH (Robson et al., 2007). Occupational safety and health risks encompass a variety of potential hazards and unsafe working conditions that may result in injuries, illnesses, or other harm to employees (Badri et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2023). These risks can range from physical hazards such as slips and falls and machinery accidents to chemical dangers involving exposure to toxic substances. Biological risks, such as exposure to hazardous bacteria or viruses, ergonomic risks from poor workplace design or repetitive tasks, and psychosocial risks, such as stress or harassment in the workplace, also contribute to the spectrum of OSH concerns. Other risks include electrical hazards, poorly maintained equipment, fire and explosion hazards due to combustible materials, and human error and negligence. Effective OSH management seeks to establish a work environment that is as secure and healthy as possible by identifying, assessing, and mitigating these risks through preventative measures, employee training, and ongoing risk assessment (Liu et al., 2023).

Intricately linked to OSH is the concept of job security, particularly emphasised in economies undergoing substantial transitions or in a state of fluctuating stability (Greenhalgh & Rosenblatt, 1984). Research findings have compellingly argued that a lack of job security serves as a significant stressor, thereby elevating the risk for a spectrum of health-related issues that range from physical to mental health conditions (Ferrie et al., 2002; Witte et al., 2016). Furthermore, it has been established that the subjective experience of job insecurity inversely correlates with positive workplace performance metrics and pro-safety behaviours, effectively acting as an antecedent to compromised workplace safety (Probst & Brubaker, 2001).

As a nuanced facet of occupational health, presenteeism—defined as the phenomenon of attending work despite being medically unwell—has garnered increasing academic attention as a significant health-related issue within occupational settings (Aronsson & Gustafsson, 2005; Lohaus & Habermann, 2019). Influenced by a complex interplay of factors such as job demands, an absence of job security, and a lack of institutional support structures like paid sick leaves, presenteeism has been framed as both a symptom and a contributing factor to deteriorating OSH standards (Hansen & Andersen, 2008). Importantly, while the immediate impact of presenteeism may superficially appear to favour productivity, research indicates that it is likely to be detrimental to long-term employee well-being and could escalate safety risks within the workplace (Cooper & Lu, 2016).

A pivotal factor in the occupational health discourse, the perception of fair or equitable compensation has been explored through the lens of Adams' Equity Theory (1965), which posits that imbalances between input (e.g., work effort) and output (e.g., remuneration) can be a potential source of workplace stress and dissatisfaction (Shaw & Gupta, 2007). Recent empirical studies have corroborated the significance of this concept by suggesting that perceived inequities in compensation are directly linked to elevated stress levels and deteriorating mental well-being, thereby creating an environment where safety protocols may be compromised or neglected (Colquitt et al., 2001; Tekleab et al., 2005).

By exploring the above literature, a nuanced understanding of OSH unfolds, emphasising its evolution from a focus on tangible risks to incorporating a broader spectrum of psychosocial factors. Initially, OSH research primarily concentrated on explicit physical hazards such as

machinery accidents, chemical exposures, and environmental dangers. However, a paradigm shift is noted in recent studies, which now also consider intangible factors like job security, stress, and burnout, thus painting a more inclusive picture of OSH. A significant portion of the literature is devoted to the nuanced factors affecting OSH. One such factor is job security, which is underlined as a crucial stressor influencing employees' physical and mental health. A lack of job security is portrayed as a risk to physical and mental health and a detriment to workplace performance and adherence to safety practices. Presenteeism, the practice of attending work while medically ill, is highlighted as another subtle yet substantial issue in occupational health. This idea is broken down into many parts, including factors like high job demands, lack of job security, and poor institutional support, which show how it affects occupational health in many ways. Despite seemingly boosting productivity in the short term, presenteeism is critiqued for its detrimental effects on long-term employee well-being and overall safety within occupational settings. Lastly, the literature delves into the concept of equitable compensation, linking it to employee stress and satisfaction levels. It underscores the significance of perceived fairness in compensation, elucidating its direct influence on workplace stress, satisfaction, and adherence to safety norms. The nuanced discussion within the above literature suggests that perceived inequities in compensation can foster an environment conducive to neglecting or compromising safety standards.

Relevant Theories

The theoretical premise of this present study can be found to be supported by a variety of well-known theories, including the Equity Theory (Adams, 1965), the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991), the Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), and the Presenteeism Theory (Bartlett, 2013; Cooper & Lu, 2016).

The equity theory, which was introduced by Adams (1965), is an essential component of the theoretical framework of this study, with the primary emphasis being placed on compensation equity. According to this idea, workers look for a reasonable equilibrium or equity between the inputs they provide, such as their effort and performance, and the outcome they receive, such as their remuneration and recognition. Individuals experience frustration and tension as a result of the perception of imbalance, which compels them to work towards resolving the issue. In the context of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) issues, employees' perceptions of disparities in remuneration may influence their motivation, job satisfaction, and their perception of threats and risks in the workplace, which in turn guides their behaviour and attitudes towards OSH practices and protocols. Similarly, the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989) highlights the importance of resource depletion and acquisition in the stress experiences of individuals. In the context of work, the term 'resource' refers to material possessions and intangible advantages, such as the assurance of a steady income and favourable working conditions. The perception of a loss of these resources, or the danger of their loss, can contribute to elevated levels of stress as well as a heightened awareness of occupational safety and health concerns.

In addition, the motivation and hygiene theory, often known as Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg et al., 1959), contributes to the investigation of work enthusiasm. The idea distinguishes between variables that lead to increased job satisfaction (motivators) and factors

that lead to decreased job satisfaction (hygiene factors). Understanding the ways in which inner motivators and extrinsic hygienic variables, such as business regulations and compensation, influence work enthusiasm and, as a result, perceptions of occupational safety and health concerns is helpful. Furthermore, the phenomenon of employees continuing to report to work while having health impairments is the subject of the presenteeism theory (Bartlett, 2013; Cooper & Lu, 2016). By incorporating this theory, the research can explore how presenteeism correlates with perceived OSH risks, considering the underlying motivations and organisational factors that drive individuals to work while unwell.

Previous Studies

Previous research has established various factors influencing OSH. Johns (2009) and Smith et al. (2016) identify a strong correlation between occupational safety and health (OSH) risks and presenteeism, particularly in high-risk sectors like healthcare and construction; it complements researchers' argument (Aronsson et al., 2000) about a trade-off between absenteeism and presenteeism in hazardous industries. Studies by Guardado and Ziebarth (2018) and Shaw and Gupta (2007) examine this issue, suggesting that perceptions of unfair compensation arise when there is an imbalance between risks and rewards.

The connection between job insecurity and OSH risk perception is further supported by research from Witte et al. (2015) and Sverke et al. (2002), which links job insecurity to elevated stress levels and heightened awareness of workplace hazards (Probst, 2004). On the topic of work enthusiasm, studies by McKevitt et al. (1997) and Nuhait et al. (2017) indicate that increased work engagement may exacerbate presenteeism. Miraglia and Johns (2016), who suggest that enthusiastic employees may overlook their own health risks, reinforce this observation. In the domain of compensation, research reveals a tension between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic rewards (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Ryan & Deci, 2000), suggesting that enthusiasm for work can lead to perceptions of unfair compensation. Maertz and Campion (2017) and Cheng and Chan (2007) tie job insecurity to lowered job satisfaction, which includes feelings of unfair compensation, a point further supported by Shoss (2017).

The above literature on OSH risks provides a variety of viewpoints on the topic. These viewpoints emphasise factors such as job security, presenteeism, compensation equity, and work enthusiasm. However, the research landscape appears to be fairly fragmented, with many studies focusing on different attributes in isolation rather than adopting a more integrated strategy, which results in a lack of clarity regarding the state of the field and blurs up the complex relationship of different factors that have an overall effect on perceptions and experiences of occupational safety and health concerns. In addition, a careful analysis of the work done in the past reveals an orientation towards making broad generalisations without conducting sufficient contextually specific research. In particular, it looks as though there is a shortage of study that goes thoroughly into one-of-a-kind socio-economic and historical settings, such as that of Estonia, which may considerably affect OSH perceptions and experiences. The capacity of discoveries to be applied universally without making nuanced modifications to local circumstances has the potential to limit the practical utility and relevance of the existing body of knowledge.

Furthermore, although the existing body of research has made significant progress in studying the concrete and quantitative aspects of OSH, there appears to be a relative underemphasis on areas that are more subjective and nuanced, such as the perceptions, feelings, and attitudes of employees. There is a tendency for the focus to be skewed towards physical and overt threats, which might lead the psychosocial aspects of occupational safety and health to be overlooked. A perspective as narrow as this one may make it difficult to gain a more comprehensive understanding of occupational safety and health concerns and the many ways in which they can manifest, but it opens the door to the possibility of conducting additional studies in this field. Therefore, this research has taken advantage of this chance and has begun from such a vantage position.

Objectives and Hypotheses

The primary aim of this study is to examine the relationship between compensation equity, job security, presenteeism, and work enthusiasm and the perception of occupational safety and health issues among the workforce in Estonia. In order to do this, several hypotheses have been put forward:

Hypothesis 1: Increased occupational safety and health risks are associated with increased presenteeism.

Hypothesis 2: Increased perceptions of occupational safety and health risks are associated with decreased feelings of being fairly compensated.

Hypothesis 3: Increased perceptions of job insecurity are associated with increased perceptions of occupational safety and health risks.

Hypothesis 4: Increased enthusiasm for work is associated with increased presenteeism.

Hypothesis 5: Increased enthusiasm for work is associated with decreased feelings of being fairly compensated.

Hypothesis 6: Increased perceptions of job insecurity are associated with decreased feelings of being fairly compensated.

Method

Source of Data

The data used in this research were sourced from Eurofound's European Working Conditions Telephone Survey conducted in 2021 (Eurofound, 2023). The survey incorporates various variables related to working conditions, including occupational health and safety, job security, presenteeism, work enthusiasm, and compensation equity.

The Eurofound technical report (2022) on the EWCTS 2021 methodology offers detailed insights into data collection, sampling, and validation processes. Employing a representative sample of employed residents aged 16 and over in the surveyed countries, a unified single-stage, un-clustered sampling design was implemented in 35 out of 36 participating countries (Eurofound, 2022). The survey provides a comprehensive and cross-national data set, focusing on multiple dimensions of working conditions across various European countries, including Estonia. The sample for this paper specifically focuses on data collected from the Estonian workforce. The sample from Estonia consisted of 1,804 participants, of which 40.7% were male and 59.3% were female. The age distribution was as follows: 4.5% of participants were between

the ages of 16-24, 20.7% fell within the 25-34 age group, 27.7% were between 35-44 years old, 25.6% were in the 45-55 age bracket, and 21.5% were 56 years old or above.

Data Analysis Technique

To examine the relationships between the selected variables, the study employed a variety of measures of association metrics, including Spearman's rho, Kendall's Tau *B*, and Somers' *d*. Employing these metrics aimed to provide a nuanced understanding of the relationship among the factors. To further explore intricate relationships among variables, exhaustive CHAID, a decision-tree technique, was used. The exhaustive CHAID method categorises datasets into distinct and mutually exclusive groups based on the influence of multiple predictor variables, isolating statistically significant groups with respect to the categories of a dependent variable (Milanović & Stamenković, 2016). For data analysis, SPSS-23.0 was the tool of choice. The research adhered to all ethical requirements (Saunders et al., 2019) and ensured no identifiable risks were associated with the data collected.

Operationalization

The constructs examined in this study were operationalized using specific questionnaire items derived from the EWCTS 2021. Below is Table 1, which outlines the item codes, the variables they represent, and the specific questions used for operationalization.

The items were chosen for their direct relevance to the constructs under investigation and because they are part of a well-established and rigorously tested survey instrument. Each item serves as a proxy for measuring the broader concept with which it is associated. For instance, the item 'Do you think your health or safety is at risk because of your work?' gauges perceptions of occupational health and safety risks. Similarly, the item 'I am enthusiastic about my job' measures the level of work enthusiasm among respondents. Such an approach allows for a targeted examination of the constructs and provides a nuanced understanding of factors affecting perceptions of occupational health and safety within the Estonian workforce.

Table 1

Questionnaire Items Utilised For Operationalise the Concepts

Item code	Variables	Relevant items utilized in operationalization
Q73	Occupational health and safety	Do you think your health or safety is at risk because of your work?
Q90B	Work enthusiasm	I am enthusiastic about my job
Q84a	Presenteeism	Over the past 12 months did you work when you were sick?
Q89A	Compensation equity	Considering all my efforts and achievements in my job, I feel I get paid appropriately
Q89C	Job security	I might lose my job in the next 6 months

Source: Derived from EWCTS-2021 data (Eurofound, 2023)

In this research, the measurement items are single-item scales sourced from the rigorously designed survey EWCTS. While traditional measures (e.g., Cronbach's alpha) are not applicable for assessing the reliability of single-item scales, prior research supports the use of well-crafted single items for specific constructs under certain conditions (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2007; Diamantopoulos et al., 2012). The validity and reliability of single-item measures are also bolstered when the constructs they aim to measure are clear, unambiguous, and the subject of consensus, conditions met by the items in this study (Gardner et al., 1998). Additionally, the items used have high face validity, as they were developed and tested by Eurofound, an

organisation with a track record for creating reliable and valid survey instruments (Eurofound, 2018).

Results

Level of Occupational Safety and Health Risks, Work Enthusiasm, Presenteeism, Compensation Equity and Job Security

Table 2 provides a detailed breakdown of the frequency and percentage of responses for each of the variables. A notable 30.8% of respondents felt their health and safety were at risk due to their work. About 21.5% of respondents indicated they had worked while sick in the past 12 months, which could signify an underlying issue of job insecurity or cultural norms that encourage overwork, potentially at the cost of personal and collective health. There is a mixed perception of pay equity. While 17.6% strongly agree and 24.4% tend to agree that they are paid fairly, about 17.5% (9.5% who tend to disagree and 8.0% who strongly disagree) feel otherwise, which could indicate discrepancies in pay scales or a general feeling of inequity that needs to be addressed. In addition, 48.3% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that they might lose their job in the next six months, indicating a potential sense of job security among a large portion of the surveyed population. About 42.5% of respondents (20.0% often and 22.5% always) are enthusiastic about their work, which could be a positive indicator of workplace satisfaction.

Table 2

Frequency and Percentage of Respondents to Factors

Items		Frequency	Percent
Q73	DK/no opinion (spontaneous)	13	.7
	Yes	555	30.8
	No	1236	68.5
	Total	1804	100.0
Q84a	Refusal (spontaneous)	3	.2
	DK/no opinion (spontaneous)	3	.2
	Yes	388	21.5
	No	1372	76.1
	I was not sick (spontaneous)	38	2.1
	Total	1804	100.0
Q89A	Refusal (spontaneous)	1	.1
	DK (spontaneous)	2	.1
	Not applicable (spontaneous)	4	.2
	Strongly agree	318	17.6
	Tend to agree	441	24.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	118	6.5
	Tend to disagree	172	9.5
	Strongly disagree	145	8.0
	Total responses	1201	66.6
	System	603	33.4
	Total	1804	100.0
Q89C	DK (spontaneous)	37	2.1
	Not applicable (spontaneous)	7	.4
	Strongly agree	129	7.2
	Tend to agree	135	7.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	187	10.4
	Tend to disagree	437	24.2
	Strongly disagree	872	48.3
	Total	1804	100.0
Q90B	DK (spontaneous)	1	.1
	Never	4	.2
	Rarely	31	1.7
	Sometimes	102	5.7
	Often	360	20.0
	Always	405	22.5
	Total responses	903	50.1
	System	901	49.9
	Total	1804	100.0

Assessment from Hypotheses

The analysis of six hypotheses exploring the relationships between occupational safety and health risks, presenteeism, compensation equity, job security, and enthusiasm for work, all hypotheses were supported by statistically significant correlations. Based on the correlation in Table 3, hypothesis 1 is supported as there is a positive correlation between occupational safety and health risks (Q73) and presenteeism (Q84a), with Spearman's rho at .13 and significance at $p < .001$. Hypothesis 2 is also supported, indicated by a negative correlation between perceptions of occupational safety and health risks (Q73) and feelings of being fairly compensated (Q89A); Spearman's rho is -.21, also significant at $p < .001$. Hypothesis 3 shows support with a positive correlation between job insecurity (Q89C) and occupational safety and health risks (Q73), Spearman's rho at .09, significant at $p < .001$. Hypothesis 4 is supported by a positive correlation between work enthusiasm (Q90B) and presenteeism (Q84a), Spearman's rho at .10, significant at $p < .01$. Hypothesis 5 is supported by a negative correlation between work enthusiasm (Q90B) and feelings of being fairly compensated (Q89A), Spearman's rho at -.13, significant at $p < .001$. Finally, hypothesis 6 is supported by a negative correlation between perceptions of job insecurity (Q89C) and feelings of being fairly compensated (Q89A), with Spearman's rho at -.18 and significant at $p < .001$.

Table 3

Correlation between OSH and Work Factors

Correlation		Q73	Q84a	Q89A	Q89C	Q90B
Q73	Spearman's rho	—				
	Kendall's Tau B	—				
	Somers' d	—				
Q84a	Spearman's rho	.13 ***	—			
	Kendall's Tau B	.12 ***	—			
	Somers' d	.13 ***	—			
Q89A	Spearman's rho	-.21 ***	-.10 ***	—		
	Kendall's Tau B	-.19 ***	-.09 ***	—		
	Somers' d	-.14 ***	-.08 ***	—		
Q89C	Spearman's rho	.09 ***	.04	-.18 ***	—	
	Kendall's Tau B	.08 ***	.04 *	-.15 ***	—	
	Somers' d	.07 ***	.03	-.15 ***	—	
Q90B	Spearman's rho	.05	.10 **	-.13 ***	.05	—
	Kendall's Tau B	.05 *	.10 ***	-.12 ***	.04 *	—
	Somers' d	.04	.09 **	-.12 **	.04	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Interaction Analysis

The CHAID Tree diagram (Figure 1) reveals statistically significant interactions among various factors affecting the perception of occupational risk. Notably, compensation equity emerges as the most critical variable in shaping employees' views on occupational safety and health risks. Following that, presenteeism and job security come into play. The interactions unfold as follows: when employees feel they are equitably compensated, the likelihood of perceiving an

OSH risk stands at 53.5%. However, when employees believe they are fairly compensated and also report no issues of presenteeism, the probability of them perceiving no OSH risk surges to 75.9%.

In Table 4, two estimation methods are displayed: resubstitution and cross-validation. Resubstitution shows an estimate of .30 with a standard error of .01, indicating the risk as assessed on the same dataset on which the model was trained. Cross-validation, a more generalised and reliable method, shows a slightly higher risk estimate of .30 with the same standard error of .01. Table 5 reveals the model's predictive power: it correctly identifies 'No' risk 94.6% of the time but only accurately predicts 'Yes' risk 13.9% of the time, with an overall prediction accuracy of 69.6%.

Table 4

Risk (CHAID)

Method	Estimate	Std. Error
Resubstitution	.30	.01
Cross-Validation	.30	.01

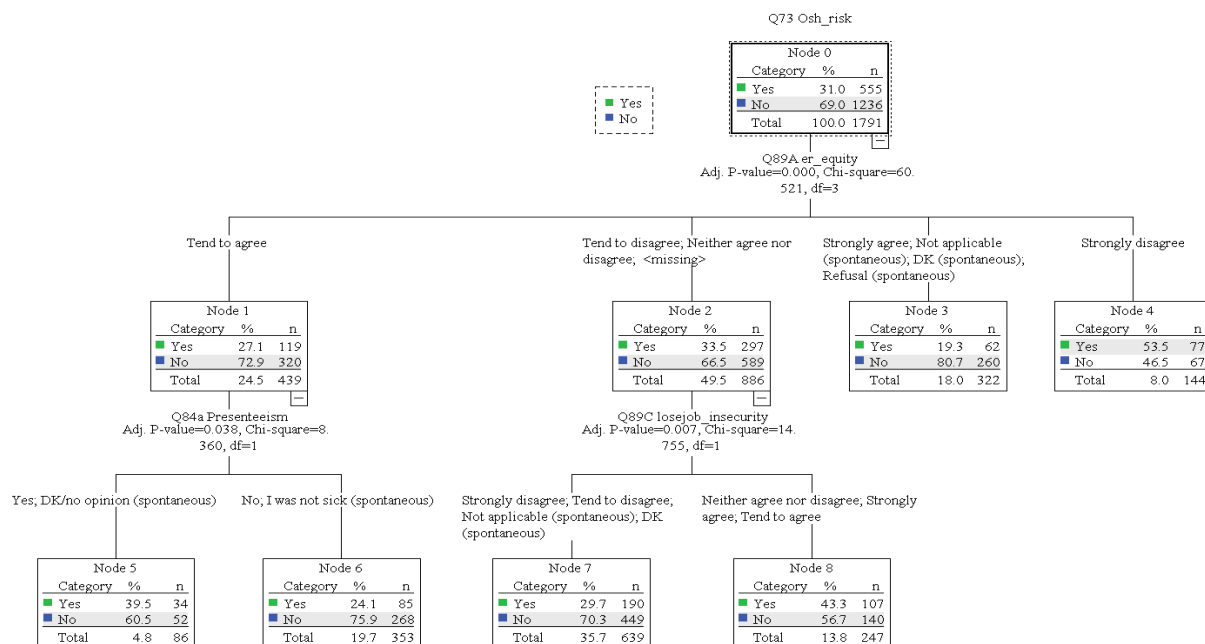
Table 5

Classification

Observed	Predicted		Percent Correct
	Yes	No	
Yes	77	478	13.9%
No	67	1169	94.6%
Overall Percentage	8.0%	92.0%	69.6%

Figure 1

CHAID Tree



Discussion

The present study explored the intricate relationships between occupational safety and health risks, presenteeism, compensation equity, job security, and enthusiasm for work among employees. The analyses revealed several noteworthy findings. Importantly, all the posited hypotheses found statistical support, underscoring the complex interplay of the factors under scrutiny.

The study affirms that occupational safety and health risks are positively correlated with presenteeism, aligning with Prater and Smith (2011). It also notes that work enthusiasm can lead to presenteeism, corroborating Bakker and Demerouti (2018) and Rodríguez-Cifuentes et al. (2020). The importance of compensation equity in OSH risk perception is emphasised, extending Valet's (2023) findings. Job insecurity is linked to both higher OSH risks and lower compensation satisfaction, consistent with Reisel et al. (2010) and Begum et al. (2022). Adding depth to these findings, the interaction analysis presented an intriguing insight: compensation equity is the most potent predictor of how employees perceive OSH risks. Notably, if employees feel fairly compensated and do not exhibit presenteeism, their likelihood of perceiving no OSH risk increases substantially.

This study contributes to the literature by answering how factors such as compensation equity, job security, presenteeism, and work enthusiasm affect the perception of occupational safety and health risks among the Estonian workforce. The research findings have nuanced implications for both employees and employers who are striving to improve occupational safety and health conditions and overall organisational success. Firstly, the issue of presenteeism—employees showing up to work when it might be unsafe or unhealthy to do so—is clearly concerning. In a society like Estonia, where work ethics are strong, the positive correlation between presenteeism and perceived OHS risks might suggest that employees are pushing themselves to attend work even when it is risky, perhaps due to societal or organisational expectations. Such behaviour poses serious risks, not just to the individual employees but also to the organisation, potentially creating an environment where safety is not valued. Secondly, the study indicates that perceptions of fair compensation are adversely affected when employees find their work environment unsafe. It could have a domino effect on employee morale and lead to higher turnover rates, which is a pressing concern in Estonia's competitive labour market. Employers may need to reconsider their compensation packages, especially in industries where the risk is perceived to be high, to ensure they are adequately compensating for the additional risks taken by the employees. Thirdly, job insecurity was found to be another significant factor linked to perceptions of OHS risks. In the Estonian context, where labour mobility and contractual jobs have been on the rise, feelings of job insecurity can add another layer of stress for employees and further influence perceptions around OHS. Fourthly, enthusiasm for work—while generally a positive trait—showed a dark side. High enthusiasm was linked to more instances of presenteeism and a lesser concern for fair compensation. In a high-achieving society like Estonia, where people are often deeply committed to their jobs, such a trait can be a double-edged sword. Lastly, job insecurity and feelings of unfair compensation were found to be interlinked. In Estonia, where economic conditions and labour markets can vary widely between sectors and geographic regions, these findings suggest that a holistic approach to employee well-being is required.

Although this work has made valuable contributions, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. The research is subject to several limitations. One noteworthy constraint is that while it primarily identifies correlations, it is crucial to recognise that correlation does not necessarily imply causation. The present study may have limitations in terms of its coverage, potentially neglecting significant aspects such as managerial behaviour, work-life balance, or specific industry characteristics that have the potential to impact occupational safety and health risks. Moreover, this study is dependent on data obtained through self-reporting, a method that is susceptible to subjectivity and may not comprehensively represent the intricacies of the work environment.

In order to further advance the topic, it is recommended that future research endeavours focus on conducting more extensive studies to investigate the correlation between managerial practises and individuals' perceptions of occupational safety and health concerns. The utilisation of longitudinal research methods has the potential to offer valuable insights into the intricate causal linkages that exist between presenteeism, job security, and compensation equity. Cross-industry comparisons may also prove valuable in determining the extent to which these findings are universally applicable or specialised to particular industries. Examining the impact of work-life balance on the relationship between presenteeism and occupational safety and health risk perceptions could provide additional insights, enabling organisations to develop more efficient policies.

Conclusion

This study illuminates the complex relationships between factors affecting occupational safety and health risks among the Estonian workforce. The study highlights the significance of addressing presenteeism, as it is associated with higher perceived occupational safety and health risks. In order to mitigate the unintended result of increased presenteeism, special consideration needs to be given to managing work enthusiasm. Moreover, fair compensation is essential for shaping employees' perceptions of safety, and job insecurity is associated with higher risks and reduced compensation satisfaction. By addressing these factors holistically, organisations can provide employees with a better place to work.

Declarations

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