

Good example of ergonomics and school library automation article review

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Article#1 Summary:

Magazine: Emergency Librarian

Article: “ Ergonomics and School Library Automation” by Anne Clyde

Summary of the Article:

The article entitled “ Ergonomics and School Library Automation” written by Clyde (1994) presented relevant issues pertaining to the safety and health conditions of personnel in the library setting. The author initially expounded on the historical evolution of the term ‘ ergonomics’ where its roots were traced to as early as 1949. Current understanding of the term emphasized encompassing three disciplines such as: safety and health conditions in the work setting; the overall comfort and reported well-being; as well as issues affecting to efficiency and productivity . With the advent of computerization and automation, the author eventually asserted the need to evaluate personnel working in the library setting with these recent applications. Clyde (1994) eventually presented normal work-related ergonomics problems in the library setting where computers were predominantly used.. These problems allegedly include staring at long periods of time at the monitor despite varied lighting conditions; using computer peripherals (mouse, key pads, touch screen) for equally long time frames; working on computer-related endeavors under stress due to restrictions in time and resources; among others. Using ergonomic-related terms to identify and categorize these problems, the following terms were evidently presented: occurrence of repetitive strain injury (RSI), which is deemed synonymous with ‘ occupational overuse syndrome’ (OOS) or ‘ cumulative trauma disorder’ (CTD) . The condition was noted to potentially affect the

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musculoskeletal and nervous systems due to the repetition of tasks or motions, sustaining awkward postures, and even apparent exposure to distractions or noise over a considerable length of time. Likewise, another problem that was disclosed was reportedly known as carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS), which means damage to the parts of the wrists and hands through prolonged rubbing associated with using the computer.

The other problems identified include dilemmas related to the eyes or visual problems; environmental problems (lighting, reflections from the monitor or computer screen); and even the revealed low-frequency magnetic fields which were noted to be produced by monitors or video device units (VDUs) . Previous research studies on the latter dilemma clearly stipulate tendencies for workers to develop health-related concerns, especially to pregnant women (risk of miscarriage); potential suppression of immune system; as well as links to the development of cancer.

Personal Analysis/Synthesis of the Article:

One hereby affirms that the information contained in the article are significantly useful to the readers, specifically those who are most affected in the library setting. It was commendable for the author to clearly present pertinent information regarding the origin of the term ' ergonomics' and how automation and computerization evidently affected various work settings. The focus on the library, as the work place, indicated vast array of work-related problems that ensued from frequent use of computers and due to automation. Readers were provided with opportunities to learn new terms associated with ergonomics-related dilemmas, including the commonly known repetitive strain injury (RSI). Library users, clients, and personnel

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might not be aware that working for long periods of time in front of computers expose them to potential health risks and hazards. Thus, learning how to prevent these risks to potential occupational injuries were illuminating and enlightening. The author presented the article with the use of language and vocabulary that is clear and easy to understand by a wide array of audience. One therefore finally assert that the findings would benefit library practitioners and users to be more aware of ergonomics related designs and stances which would prevent occupational injuries and ensure that working in the library would continue to be safe and sound for the overall well-being.

Reference

Clyde, A. (1994). Ergonomics and School Library Automation. *Emergency Librarian*, Vol. 2, Issue 1.