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EVALUATION AND DETERMINATION OF THE EPI ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE INDEX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ORGANIZATION IN THE FIELD OF TREATMENT

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to evaluate and determine the environmental performance index (EPI) of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment. The statistical population of this study included all 880 employees of the Social Security Organization of Mazandaran province in the field of treatment in 2016. The sample size of the population was 268 according to the Cochran formula. Sampling was conducted using simple random method. Researcher-made questionnaire was used in order to collect information. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by the supervisor and its reliability was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha. In order to analyze the data, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test and one-sample T test were used. Results have shown that water, habitat, child mortality, and air quality are considered the EPI Environmental Performance Indicators of the Social Security Organization. The results also showed that child mortality, air quality, habitat, water, and sanitation had a higher priority among the EPI environmental performance indicators of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment.

Keywords: *Environmental Performance, Social Security.*

INTRODUCTION

Environmental issues are currently one of the most important issues in many countries of the world, globally and nationally; so far important international conferences and meetings have been held and countries have signed several treaties and conventions to prevent the deterioration of the global environment. Having enough information on the status of the environment of the countries and the assessment of the environmental processes have been one of the issues of interest to global communities in recent years. This matter plays a very important role in recognizing and understanding the status of environment to determine the necessary changes in management and presentation of management plans. Hence, many environmental indicators have been introduced to monitor environmental degradation processes by the United Nations and universities. These indicators include the United Nations sustainable development indicators, millennium development goal 7, World Bank development indicators. One of the most important of these indicators, which is currently widely used in the comparison with countries being published annually in terms of the protection of the environment, is the ESI (Environmental Sustainability Index) and the EPI (Environmental Performance Index), published by the University of Yale and Columbia University as well as The world economic forum (Sotoude et al., 2010). The environmental performance index

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emphasizes the two main objectives of environmental protection, as reducing environmental pressures on human health and promoting the status of ecosystems and the proper management of natural resources (Sotoude et al., 2010).

The discussion of the environment and its contamination is no longer considered just a national problem or merely the problem of industries and organizations. Now the world is facing many environmental crises. The developed world today has finally realized that the environmental problems arising from other development are not universally accepted (Soleimani, 2004). The earth and its surrounding area are affected and damaged by the invasion of humankind showing unpredictable reactions from time to time. Therefore, in recent decades, many government officials, experts, and specialists have worked hard to protect the human habitat and the environment surrounding it; in addition, they have been working on legislative and regulatory requirements to protect the lives of present and future generations from seriously compromised threats. One of these regulations is the ISO 14000 standard. This standard is a set of environmental standards; the general idea of it concerns the creation of a systematic approach to reduce harms that the organization could cause to the environment.

Since hospitals and medical centers, including medical care centers under the provision of Social Security Organization, are created as organizations aiming at treatment and control of the disease as well as the preservation of the health of the public, the responsibility of the management of dangerous infectious waste is delegated to these organizations; therefore, they should observe the standard requirements in this regard. Measuring the compliance of the management of infectious wastes with standards can help hospitals to plan and take preventive measures to reach appropriate environmental management. Hence, this research seeks to determine the EPI (environmental performance index) of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In terms of purpose, this research was applied and in terms of collecting descriptive data, it was a survey research. The statistical population of this study included all 880 employees of the Social Security Organization of Mazandaran province in the field of treatment in 2016. The sample size of the population was 268 according to the Cochran formula. Sampling was conducted using simple random method. In order to collect information on theoretical foundations and the related literature, library resources, articles, books, and the World Wide Web (Internet) were used. Questionnaires were used to collect data. An Environmental Performance Questionnaire including items of Water, Hygiene, Habitat, Children's Mortality, and Air Quality was developed by the researcher being designed in 5-point Likert scale. In this research, Cronbach's alpha test was used to measure reliability; Cronbach's alpha was 0.81 regarding the research components. This figure indicates that the questionnaire was reliable. To analyze the data of this research, descriptive and inferential statistics were used. In order to test the hypothesis of the research, Kolmogorov-Smirnov and one-sample t-test, and Friedman test were used being analyzed by SPSS software.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

According to descriptive analysis of information about the objective variables (demographic characteristics) of the society, the age group of 20 to 29 years old comprised 49 people (18.28%), the age group of 30-39 years old comprised 106 people (39.55%), the age group of 40 to 49 years old included 85 people (31.72%) and the age group of over 50 years old contained 28 people (10.45%). Furthermore, 151 people (56.34%) were men and 117 people (43.66%) were female. It also showed that 3 participants had diploma (1.12%), and 39 participants had associate degree (14.55%), 141 participants had bachelor's degree (52.61%) and 85 participants had master's degree or higher (31.72%). In addition, the service group having 10 years of experiences included 52 people (19.41%), the service group having 10 to 20 years of experience had a population of 148 (55.22%) and the service group with 20 years of experience were 52 people (19.4% Percent). The first question of the research was: what is the EPI Environmental Performance Index of the Social Security organization in the field of treatment? Initially, we used descriptive statistics related to respondents' comments on this question. The descriptive statistics of the respondents' answers to the questions related to the Environmental Performance Index –EPI- of the Social Security organization were shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics related to the first question

Component	Mean	Standard deviation	standard error
Water	3.57	0.795	0.049
Habitat	3.59	0.951	0.058
Child mortality	3.67	0.757	0.046
Air quality	3.66	0.757	0.046

The average score for the EPI (environmental performance index) of Social Security Organization was greater than 3, indicating that the mean of the respondents' answers to environmental performance indicators EPI of social security organization was higher than the average.

Tables 2 and 3 show the results of a single-sample t test for identifying the environmental performance index.

Table 2: Single sample t test results for answering the first question

	Test value = 3			
	T	Degree of freedom	Significance	Average difference
Water	11.679	267	0.000	0.616
Habitat	10.148	267	0.000	0.590
Child mortality	16.238	267	0.000	0.670
Air quality	14.352	267	0.000	0.633

According to Table 2, "significance = 0.000 <0.05", and also the difference in mean was positive, so it can be said that in response to the first question water, habitat, child mortality and air quality are an indicator of the environmental performance EPI of the Social Security Organization.

- ***Prioritizing the Environmental Performance Indicators EPI of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment***

Friedman test was used to prioritize the environmental performance indicators of the EPI of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment. Table 3 shows the results of the significance of the Friedman test.

Table 3: Significance of Friedman test in order to prioritize environmental performance indicators EPI of Social Security Organization in the field of treatment

View count	266
Chi-square statistic	8.393
Degrees of freedom	3
Significance	0.034

The significance of the Friedman test was confirmed based on Table 3. Table 4 shows the results of prioritizing the environmental performance indicators EPI of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment.

Table 4: Prioritizing Environmental Performance Indicators EPI of Social Security Organization in the field of treatment

Component	Average rating	Rating
Water and sanitation	2.32	4
Habitat	2.49	3
Child mortality	2.60	1
Air quality	2.58	2

According to the results obtained from Table 4, children's mortality, air quality, habitat, water and sanitation, respectively, have had a higher priority among the environmental performance indicators EPI of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment.

Answering the second question. What is the status of the (EPI) Environmental Performance Index of social security organization in the field of treatment?

The descriptive statistics of participant's responses on the status of the Environmental Performance Index EPI of the Social Security Organization is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: The descriptive statistics of participant's responses on the status of the Environmental Performance Index EPI of the Social Security Organization

Component	Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error of the mean
Environmental performance index	3.62	0.678	0.041

The mean of the comments on the status of the environmental performance index EPI of the social security organization was greater than 3, indicating that the mean of the views of the respondents in terms of the status of the environmental performance index EPI of social security organization was higher than the average.

Table 6 shows the results of a single-sample t test for identifying the status of the environmental performance index.

Table 6: The results of a single-sample t test for responding the second question

	Test value = 3			
	T	Degree of freedom	Significance	Average difference
Environmental performance index	15.014	267	0.000	0.622

According to Table 6, "significance = 0.000 <0.05", and also the difference in mean was positive, so it can be said that in response to the second question, The EPI Environmental Performance Index was in a favorable position in the field of treatment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results indicated that the environmental goals of an organization, considering the significant environmental aspects of the organization, the rules, and the type of available technology, the financial and executive status of the organization were in line with the environmental policy and commitment to prevent pollution. In order to achieve the environmental goals, it is necessary for the organization to plan and implement programs that include the determination of the implementation responsibilities in each section of the organization as well as the time and duration of their implementation. Organizational management should provide the necessary conditions and facilities, including the responsibilities and powers of the financial, technical, and skills necessary to implement the system.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate and determine the environmental performance index EPI of the Social Security Organization in the field of treatment. The results indicated that water, habitat, child mortality, and air quality were considered as indicators of the environmental performance indices of the Social Security Organization. The results also showed that children's mortality, air quality, habitat, water, and sanitation had a higher priority among the EPI environmental performance indicators in the field of treatment. Comparing the results of this study with the results of previous studies, there was no case that could be compared directly with the results of this study. However, some cases have had the closest overlap with this research. Jafari et al. (2012) examined and evaluated the performance of the environmental index in Chahar Mahal and Bakhtiari province. The results of the study indicated that the center of the province and the neighboring cities of the center were below the highest EPIs. Khakpoor et al. (2010) investigated the environmental impact assessment (EIA) of Mahshahr GTL Refinery by weight matrix method in a study entitled "Environmental Impact Assessment of Gas Refinery (GTL)". According to the results of the impact assessment, the construction and operation of the GTL refinery in Mahshahr was justified by corrective actions and the use of appropriate environmental management methods.

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