

Abstract

Ehab I Etman

Safety Culture, the Cure for Human Error: A Critique

Since the initial adoption of maritime safety standards, the focus was always on the ship's design and equipment nevertheless, many studies have revealed later that human factor and human error are the main reasons contributing to marine accidents. By the mid 1980's the International Maritime Organization (IMO) gave attention to the role of human factor in the maritime accidents. IMO have adopted the concept of implanting the safety culture in shipping industry. The most significant instruments which were introduced to create safety culture are the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW 78/95) convention and the International Safety Management (ISM) code. After five years of implementing the two instruments, important questions which raise themselves now are: have ISM Code and STCW convention achieved their initial objectives related to the improvement of human performance in ship operations. Moreover, is safety culture rooted in the shipping industry? Keywords: Maritime safety, human factor, human error, marine accidents, safety culture, ISM Code, STCW convention, human performance.