

**HRM 3400**  
**Occupational Health and Safety**  
**York University**  
**School of Human Resource Management**

**Health and Safety Concern(s) from Local Entertainment Company**

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## **Background**

The company from this interview is called TVS Group that is in the Greater Toronto Area. The group is also called TVS Entertainment. The headquarter of this company is in Markham, Ontario and it has about 90 employees in total including full-time and part-time. The business type of this company focuses on the local entertainment and night-life related activity. The current owner and founder is Albert Jung, a businessman originally from Fujian, China. He started this entertainment group by 2019 and having the objective to expand the night-life market in Toronto and having a great fame within the East Asian community. The interview was conducted with Max Xun, one of the human resource managers, also the store manager from this group. At the current time, TVS Group has five main stores that are focusing on karaoke and bar, which are named ABA, Birdie, AESOP, Market and IP. Their daily activity is to maintain the five main karaoke bars and provide service to customers from 2PM to 3AM. Currently, they are also looking for further expansion to new store locations and ready to open their sixth store in North Toronto.

## **OHS-Related Concerns**

Based on an interview with the store manager and human resource manager, Max Xun, this report can gather their current concern towards OHS-related issues. In this case, it is extremely complex to run a store that is related to nightlife by involving different factors such as alcohol safety, kitchen safety and customer safety. From the interview, there are three major concerns that are related to OHS as health safety under the influence of COVID19, safety on handling alcoholic products and employee's mental health condition.

By starting with the safety concern related to COVID19, the interviewee has indicated that even the government is no longer putting COVID related restrictions in the market, but it is still important to be caution with any potential infection. This is because a karaoke bar is often opened with a “close-space”. By the meaning of that, the customers coming into karaoke bars are sitting in small private rooms that have no window. On the other hand, the employees also work in a closed space. From the result, it is easy to have people infected with COVID, or other sickness that are transmitted through air.

Secondly, the interview has indicated that the major profit is not from the base-cost for customer to use the karaoke room, instead it is largely depending on the demand of alcoholic beverages. In this case, alcohol is their major profit from one side, but on other side, alcohol is also the major cause in safety issues as conflict and overdose. From the perspective of conflict, alcohol is easy to make customers lose their calm and get into verbal or physical conflicts. Such conflicts not only concern the customer’s safety, but also threaten the employees’ safety. Moreover, overdose on alcohol is another issue for both employees and customers as people are having different tolerance in alcohol. For customers, it may lead to serious health issues, and for employees who are working under environments, it is easy to reach alcoholic product, and both impact their health and ability to work.

Lastly, mental health is another concern for employees who are working at a night-life related business. This is because most of the customers come at nighttime, normally between 10PM to 3AM. In another word, most of the employees are working a night shift between 10PM to 3AM and usually leave work by 4AM or even 5AM due to cleaning and preparing for the second day. This can be impactful on an employee's mental health condition as they must work at nighttime instead of daytime and may cause unhealthy sleep routine and problems like insomnia.

## **Solution and Challenges**

Moving from the summary of the major concerns related to OHS, there are both solutions and challenges towards the issues. In terms of the three main issues, the mental health condition for employees is likely to be resolved by ensuring no one is working beyond 6 hours on a nightshift and never forcing employees to work if they are feeling uncomfortable. However, the other two problems are still facing critical challenges.

By looking at the first one of COVID-19 or related infection, the store has improved the ventilating system to avoid potential air transmitted infection. On other hand, it is highly encouraged for customers to wear masks while in public space and using disposable covers for the microphone. In the meanwhile, all rooms are provided with hand sanitizer. However, the health challenge exists as even the employees are following the code to wear masks while in public space, but the government has announced that COVID related codes are ended. In this case, it is not possible for a store to force customers to wear their mask, especially if it is a bar related store. As a result, it is hard to guarantee that all employees are working in a safety environment with no infection.

Secondly, alcoholic products are a conflict problem as the store needs them for the major profit, but it is surely causing problems. In this case, the interview is given that the stores have strict code to end alcoholic service by 2AM known as the last-call order, and cleaning everything up by 3AM. On other hand, customers must show ID in front of security to indicate their age of drinking. The employees from the store are prohibited from consuming alcoholic drinks during their work time. However, the problem still exists as people have different tolerance for alcohol, which both verbal and physical conflicts can happen. From the interview, the manager has also indicated that it is one of the major safety concerns for their employees by getting hurt or

verbally assault by customers who are drunk. It is difficult to solve as it is almost impossible to predict if a customer is a potential threat after drinking or not until he is fully drunk.

### **Questions:**

1. Do you think there is better control on alcoholic products to serve customers and avoid the safety risk in physical and verbal conflicts?
2. Even though COVID-19 has ended, for a closed-space business like karaoke bar, do you think there should still be restrictions for customers to follow?
3. It is difficult and busy to work at nightshift, especially during weekend time for nightlife business. What are the other methods to improve employees' experience and working conditions beyond what is given from the interview.
4. Drinking underage is strictly prohibited, but sometime customers use fake ID to enter the store. This is a problem for business safety as underaged teens are likely to have less control over their actions. Are there better ways to identify a person's legal age of drinking?

### **Appendix**

#### **Interview Questions:**

1. Under the current and past COVID-19. So how did your group handle the problem and make sure your staff and customers have a safe environment to enjoy.

2. Alcohol is a major part of the profit system for a night-life related business. So how can your group make sure that alcoholic products are being handled in a health and safety matter?
3. Entertainment stores like bars or clubs often open late and it involves alcohol. So, how do you make sure your staff are working with positiveness, and especially with a good mental health condition?