

Title:

Setting the Scene for Workplace Mental Health Promotion in a Swaziland Sugar Mill

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Session Title:

Workplace Cultures

Slot:

S 03: Monday, 31 July 2017: 11:45 AM-12:30 PM

Scheduled Time:

11:45 AM

Keywords:

Mental health promotion, Needs and Workplace

References:

Barry, M. M, Clarke, A. M, Jenkins, R & Patel, V. (2013). A systematic review of the effectiveness of mental health promotion interventions for young people in low and middle income countries. *BMC Public Health* 2013 13:835

Asad, R., Jubeen, S., & Iqbal, S. 2013. Effects of industrial environment on health status of workers. a case of Noon Sugar mill Bhalwal. *Social Sciences and Humanities* 4(1) 215–222

Abstract Summary:

The mental health promotion needs and psychosocial stressors of sugar-mill factory workers in Swaziland will be presented. Attendees will be introduced to the importance of mental health promotion in the workplace.

Learning Activity:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES	EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE
The learners should be able to outline psychosocial hazards in their own workplace.	The WHO Model (2010) states that the organisation of work and the organisational culture - the attitudes, values, beliefs and practices that are demonstrated daily in the enterprise can affect the mental and physical well-being of employees (usually referred to as workplace stressors) which when not addressed may cause emotional or mental stress to workers. The psychosocial work environment consists of the organizational culture (respect, trust, honesty, and transparency among employees and managers, justice, work-life balance) and organization of work (communication, workload, workers' influence and input, role clarity, recognition).

	When these factors are absent or handled poorly in the workplace they become sources of stress, or "stressors", for employees
The learners should be able to describe mental health promotion activities.	The factory workers were of the opinion that an increase in salary, improvement in conditions of employment and enhanced management and communication skills will ease the stressors. Furthermore, health education and life skills education on financial management, mental health and stress management can facilitate mental health promotion.

Abstract Text:

Purpose: The purpose of the study was to provide a descriptive summary of the mental health promotion needs related to the workplace of sugar mill factory workers in Swaziland.

Methods: A qualitative descriptive design was used and unstructured in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 purposively selected factory workers. Two questions were asked of the participants namely *Please tell me about your mental health (impilo yakho yengcodvo)* and *what do you think the workplace can do to help improve your mental health?* To clarify answers and responses probes were used to enrich the participants' descriptions. Data collection and analysis occurred concurrently until data saturation was achieved. The interviews were transcribed verbatim immediately after the interview and Tesch's (1992) method of data analysis was used.

Results: Two themes emerged from the interviews namely: Factors that influence mental health negatively (stressors) and mental health promotion needs in relation to the workplace. A major stressor for most of the participants was an inadequate salary. Other work related stressors that emanated from the data were heavy workloads and long hours, management style and approach, communication in the workplace and employee development. The factory workers were of the opinion that an increase in salary, improvement in conditions of employment and enhanced management and communication skills will ease the stressors. Furthermore, the participants indicated that health education and life skills education on financial management, mental health and stress management can facilitate the promotion of their mental health.

Conclusion: Mental health was not a familiar concept to the factory workers however stress was better known. Factory workers experience diverse conditions in the workplace as stressful. Economic factors such as the salary received caused a lot of stress for most participants. Factory workers want to learn more about mental health, stress and financial management and are of the opinion that if there is improvement in their working conditions and communication skills of supervisors and managers a more mentally healthier workplace can be created. The study can potentially set the scene for workplace mental health promotion gaining momentum in Swaziland.