

Setting the scene for WMHP in a Swaziland Sugar Mill

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Introduction

- *The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2001, p.1) maintains that there is no health without mental health.*



Introduction

- The Kingdom of Swaziland is a country with a population of about 1 201 904 in an area that is approximately 17 thousand square kilometres.
- No mental health policy
- Mental health plan
- Under resourced



Introduction

- Work & workplace can have both a positive and negative influence on the mental health of workers
- OHS has traditionally focused more on the physical work environment than the psychosocial



Introduction

- Factory workers in a sugar mill are exposed to several hazards and risks
- Heat, noise, slippery floors, working at heights, high-speed machines
- Can influence physical and mental health adversely (Canadian Mental Health Association, 2009).



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.



Research questions

- What are the mental health promotion needs of factory workers in a Sugar Mill Company in Swaziland?
- What are the opinions /viewpoints of factory workers regarding what the workplace can do to promote their mental health?



Design and method

- Qualitative descriptive design
- Unstructured in-depth interviews
- 20 purposively selected factory workers



Design and Method

- Two questions were asked:
- 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? ? (yini locabanga kutsi emsebentini wakho ingentiwa kukusita kutsi kwente impilo yakho yengcondvo ibencono)
- 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)
- Mental health promotion needs in relation to the workplace.
- A major stressor for most of the participants was an inadequate salary
- Other stressors: heavy workloads and long hours, management style and approach, communication in the workplace and employee development



Needs

- The factory workers were of the opinion that: increase in salary, improvement in conditions of employment , enhanced management and communication skills will ease the stressors.
- 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 and stress .
- A mentally healthier workplace can be created by a positive organisational culture.
- The study can potentially set the scene for workplace mental health promotion gaining momentum in Swaziland.