

**Safety In Mines Research Advisory Committee
Project Summary: SIM 13 09 03**

Project Title:	Safety and Security Challenges Impacting on Women in the South African Mining Industry		
Authors:	Zungu LI	Agency:	University of South Africa
Report Date:	30 November 2014	Related Projects:	None
Category:	Occupational Health and Safety	Applied Research	Yes

Summary:

<p>Historically, the mining industry has attracted a workforce made up of mainly men (Badenhorst 2009; Zungu 2012). However, in the recent past there has been a sturdy flow of women into the industry which came about as a consequence of a regulated process. In light of the fact that the mining industry was the domain of men at the exclusion of women there was a need for some interventions to facilitate access to the industry for women.</p> <p>The primary purpose of this project was to develop guidelines to assist the South African mining industry to adopt and implement robust and effective prevention strategies of violence and sexual harassment as important safety and security challenges faced by women in the South African mining industry.</p> <p>As a preliminary step within this project, a review of both local and international predecessor research outcomes was conducted. Secondary to this, a quantitative cross-sectional descriptive survey was conducted in the mines, using a structured questionnaire and participant observations across three study sites of different commodities, namely, Gold, Platinum and Coal mines. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with men and women to deepen the understanding of the nature and circumstances of violence and harassment in the mines.</p> <p>A total of 262 participants from the Platinum (98.0%), Gold (1.6%) and Coal (0.4%) sectors were involved in the quantitative survey. Findings showed that working shifts was associated with experiences of physical violence ($p=0.037$), verbal abuse ($p=0.031$) and bullying ($p=0.012$) indicating that those working in shifts were twice more likely to experience physical violence, verbal abuse and being bullied at work. Living at home and commuting to work was also</p>	<p>associated with quid pro quo sexual harassment ($p=0.008$). Years of working experience in the mines were associated with unwanted verbal abuse ($p=0.003$). Lastly, the place ($p=0.001$) and time ($p=0.013$) of the incident of violence was related to the perpetrator. Qualitative findings showed that the negative attitudes, harassment and discrimination experienced by women in mining are indeed barriers to women's effective integration in the sector.</p> <p>This study shows that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violence and sexual harassment is a recurrent problem for and a threat to the health, safety and security of female workers in the South African mining industry. • Policies and procedures for managing violence and sexual harassment were either non-existent or where they existed were obsolete and ineffective. • Physical violence and sexual harassment at work, particularly in the mines should be recognised as a serious prevalent problem requiring specific regulatory interventions. <p>It is recommended that effective prevention and management of workplace violence and sexual harassment in the mines, warrants the adoption, implementation and monitoring of robust multi-faceted preventive measures at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of prevention. Also, prevention strategies should include a combination of workplace policies and procedures based on a sound legislative, regulatory and enforcement framework: good practice requires organisations to emphasise primary prevention by adopting proactive interventions that include raising awareness and training programmes with the participation of men, possibly as champions.</p>
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