

PRACTICES IN THE RAILWAY INDUSTRY FOR ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF PSYCHOSOCIAL ISSUES



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INTRODUCTION

The railway industry is known as challenging workplace because of the high demand placed on individuals because of the psychological demand of the job. Strict regulations, shift work, lone work, irregular hours, conflicting tasks and aggressive co-workers and customers are just some of the issues this type of worker have to deal with. The railway sector has a large workforce that operates and maintains the rail system and there are a number of psychosocial issues prevalent in the rail industry that influence workers' health and wellbeing.



RESULTS

Effective solutions is needed for the prevention of psychosocial risks as these offer good returns in improved efficiency and productivity, better health, reduced absenteeism and lower medical Information that could provide insight into the magnitude of the problem that can influence policies and practices in the workplace.

REFERENCES

1. Leka, S & Jain, A. 2010. *Health impact of psychosocial hazards at work*. Geneva: World health organisation.
2. SANS 3000-4. Railway Safety management: Human Factor standard.

METHODOLOGY

A survey and review of literature conducted to determine the assessments done to identify psychosocial issues impacting workers in the railway industry and how these psychosocial hazards are managed.

DISCUSSION

Psychosocial hazards in the workplace concerns the management of work and the organisational contexts that have the potential for causing psychological or physical harm. The working environment and the nature of work itself are both important influences on health mainly associated with stress, burnout, anxiety and depression. Continuous exposure to psychosocial hazards in the workplace can have a negative effect on workers' health and wellbeing and over a period cause deterioration of mental and physical health.

The operator has a duty of care under the National legislation to provide a workplace that is safe and without risks thereby ensuring the health and safety of employees. According to SANS 3000-4, the Human factors standard in design is developed for the South African railway industry to match machine, environment including physical and psychological capabilities to optimize efficiency and performance of individuals and at the same time keep them safe and healthy whilst optimizing their performance.

CONCLUSION

Adequate strategies is needed to assessing psychosocial issues and reducing psychosocial risks in the workplace. Awareness amongst managers, culture of openness to raise issues that increases stress, adequate support systems and training.

A comprehensive approach and new patterns of prevention is necessary to face current psychosocial issues in the workplace.

Interventions in workplace	Actions
Primary	Taking action to reduce or eliminate stress
Secondary	Early detection of individual stress and management of distress
Tertiary	Minimizing the effects of stress related problems through treatment of symptoms

