

Cumulative Adversities and Mental Health of Employees in Workplace Settings in Gauteng Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT The authors examined the relationship between cumulative adversities, exposure to violence and mental health of employees in workplace settings in Gauteng Province, South Africa. Five hundred participants were randomly selected from three hospitals. Age of participants ranged between 18-65 years. Males were 251 (50.2%) and females were 249 (49.8%). Mean age of employees was 33.8 years (SD= 11.03). Results of a multiple regression model showed that cumulative adversities (Family, childhood, personal) and exposure to violence (direct and indirect witnessing of violence in childhood) jointly and significantly predicted poor mental health of workers, $R^2 = 0.35$, $F(5, 440) = 47.49$, $p < .0001$. The variables (CA FAM, CAPerAdv, CA ChildAdv, indirect exposure (CEDV1) and direct exposure (CEDV 2) explained 59% of the total variance on poor mental health. Of the variables, the main significant predictors of mental health were: CA PerAdv ($b = .35$, $t(445) = 7.56$, $p < .01$), CEDV1 ($b = -.123$, $t(445) = -2.18$, $p < .05$) and CEDV2 ($b = .37$, $t(445) = 6.25$, $p < .01$). In addition, the Durbin-Watson result (1.58) is less than 2 and therefore shows that the assumption of independent error is met for this model. There were no significant results for Cumulative Childhood adversity (CA.ChildAdv), indirect exposure (CEDV1) and the four subscales of mental health-somatic complaints, anxiety, social dysfunctions and depression. Since 'prevention is better than cure', it is recommended among others that workplace programmes which promote positive health should be implemented, the establishment of on-site wellness programmes.