

**AN EVALUATION OF THE LEVEL OF AWARENESS ABOUT
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES AMONG
WORKERS AT UNIVERSITY OF VENDA**

BY

NKUNA THOKO

STUDENT NUMBER: 11595638

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements of

Master in Public Health

School of Health Sciences

University of Venda

Supervisor: Prof. H.A Akinsola

Co-Supervisor: Mr A.K Tugli

2012

The results of the study revealed that the level of awareness about occupational health and safety was poor based on the following findings: 46 (3.7%) never heard about Occupational Health and Safety Act before, while 37 (30.3%) heard about OHS Act from their previous jobs. Forty nine percent revealed that there is no OHS in the premises, while 65 (53.3%) revealed that there have no representatives in the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. Furthermore, 57 (46.72%) knew nothing about the role of safety representatives. It was recommended that the University should create awareness among the workers by establishing health and safety education programmes.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the level of awareness about occupational health and safety practices among Venda workers. The study employed a cross sectional descriptive design. A questionnaire was used to collect data. The study population was all the workers who were more at risk of occupational health hazards on daily basis than others from the following departments: Ground / horticulture, Technical services, Protection and cleaning services. The questionnaire was self – administered and the data was analysed descriptively using the SPSS (Statistical Programme for Social Sciences).

Occupational hazards cause or contribute to the premature death of millions of people worldwide and results in the ill health or disablement of hundreds of millions more each year. World Health Organisation reports, indicated that occupational risk factors account globally for a number of morbidity conditions, including 37% of back pains, 16% of hearing loss, 13% of chronic obstructive lungs disease, 11% of asthma, 10% of injuries and 9% of lung cancer. According to the report, mortality is also due to work related injuries causing nearly 310,000 deaths each year and nearly 146,000 deaths are attributable to work related carcinogens (WHO, 2005).

ABSTRACT