

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY
PRINCIPLE IN RELATION TO WOMEN WORKERS AT THE LESOTHO PRECIOUS
GARMENT FACTORY

BY

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the academic requirements for the degree of Master of Social Science (Public Policy) in the School of Social Sciences, College of Humanities, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus.

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DECLARATION

I, Lisemelo Lydia Chesetsi, declare that this dissertation is my own work. All ideas borrowed from other sources have been acknowledged and duly referenced.

Signature

Date

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.....

Lisemelo Chesetsi (215078476)

DEDICATION

To my loving Mother Matseliso Chesetsi and my late brother Mothetsi Chesetsi.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my very profound gratitude to the following people; without their unfailing support this accomplishment would have remained a dream.

Firstly, I thank the Almighty God for His unfailing love and kindness. Without His presence in my life I would not have had the strength and wisdom to write this paper.

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To my loving mother and grandmother, thank-you for your unfailing support, prayers and words of encouragement throughout the years of my academic journey. This accomplishment would have not been possible without the two of you. Thank-you for trusting me with this journey. *Kea Leboha Matebele*

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the occupational health and safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. The study investigated the perceptions and the experiences of Basotho women working at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. The study employed an evaluative, qualitative research design. Major findings were gathered through the use of semi-structured, open-ended interviews with women working at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory, and the officials from the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Department of Health and Environment. Findings from this study revealed that some of the common hazards that workers are exposed to include: physical, ergonomic, psycho-social and mechanical hazards. Furthermore, the findings revealed that there is no national policy regarding occupational health and safety in the textile industries of Lesotho. It became evident from the narratives of the participants that the absence of a national health and safety policy in Lesotho has trivialised safety issues within the industry. Consequently this has increased the rate of occupational hazards in textile industries. The study therefore recommends that there is a need for a comprehensive national policy to oversee the activities of factory owners in complying with international labour standards.

Keywords: Safety; Health hazards; Women; Textile industries; Policy

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

This research seeks to evaluate the implementation of the occupational health and safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. The study therefore assesses how the occupational health and safety principles have improved the working conditions of Basotho women at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. This chapter presents the background to the study, the research problem, as well as the research objectives that are derived from the problem statement and the key questions that were used to investigate the study at hand. It further outlines the significance of the study and the structure of the dissertation.

1.2. Background

The increasing percentage of women in export-oriented industries raises diverse questions about the different effects of work on women (Lansky, et al., 2016). The types of health risks women face are associated with their specific working conditions and women in export-oriented industries are working in conditions that have adverse health effects on them (Lansky, et al., 2016). The International Labour Organisation has expressed concerns over the different effects of exposure to hazardous substances and biological agents on the reproductive health of women; the physical demands of heavy work; the ergonomic design of the workplace and the length of the working day in textile industries (Lansky, et al., 2016). Women working in hazardous sectors and occupations such as agriculture, mining, and manufacturing are said to be more vulnerable to occupational health hazards. The United Nations report (2012) notes that by 2012, the percentage of women working in the agricultural sector was 27 per cent and in the mining, sector they comprised 26 per cent, whereas in the textile industries the female workforce was estimated to be 80-85 per cent.

Babel and Tiwari (2014) explain that occupational hazards in the textile industry are higher when compared with those of other industries. They contend that workers in these industries are exposed to major occupational hazards such as; physical hazards, chemical hazards, ergonomic and physiological hazards.¹ Lesotho is a nation faced with a high unemployment rate and poverty, however, with the emergence of the textile industry in Lesotho, there has

¹ Occupational hazards are long term or short term risks associated with the work-place environment.

been a tremendous change to the economic status of the country and that of women. Export-oriented industries have proven to be a pillar of the country's economy by contributing 19 per cent to the country's gross domestic product (Bureau of statistics, 2014). With the emergence of the textile industry in Lesotho, multitudes of Basotho women shifted from an agricultural means of support to work in export-oriented industries to financially support their families (Nseera, 2014). Akhter, et al. (2017) argue that women have gained higher preference over their male counterparts in these industries because textile employers believe that women are more obedient and passive; unlike men who are said to disagree with the conditions in these industries and in most cases react to them by joining unions and participating in strikes. Furthermore, they believe that women's labour is relatively cheap and they are alleged to have low bargaining power compared to men (Dyer, 2001).

With the above mentioned harsh working conditions, women persist in seeking employment in these industries. Dyer (2001) argues that the simplest explanation for this is that women are desperate, and they do not have many alternatives. Most importantly the pressure on women to take any job at any given wage depends on the circumstances of their household and their position. Most women with no other means of support will work for whatever wage is offered to them due to the fact that they need to fulfill their responsibilities (Dyer, 2001). Most them also seek employment in these industries because of poverty as most of them do not have access and control over productive inputs such as credit, land, technology, and education. Thus, with all these push factors, they are forced to work in these harsh conditions (Watch, 2011).

1.3. Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Alli (2008, p.vii) conceptualises an Occupational Health and Safety Policy as “the evaluation and control of hazards arising in or from the workplace that could have a negative impact on the health and well-being of workers”. An Occupational Health and Safety Policy aims to provide a clean, safe and low-risk health environment for the employees (Alli, 2008). According to Subramani and Somasundaram (2015), an Occupational Health and Safety Policy also aims to ensure productivity, quality products, work motivation and to improve the overall quality of life of workers. An Occupational Health and Safety Policy is of paramount importance in all emerging economies and it is an important aspect of every organisation as its impact is enormous on people and the environment. According to Alli (2008), such a

policy is grounded on the principle that workers as well as employers and the government ought to ensure that the rights of workers are protected, and they must all strive to establish and maintain decent working conditions and a decent working environment. Furthermore, work should take place in a safe and healthy working environment; the conditions of work should be consistent with the workers' well-being and human dignity (Alli, 2008).

Presently there is no national policy concerning Occupational Health and Safety in the textile industry of Lesotho. It was established during data collection that the policy is yet to be implemented. Nonetheless, the government of Lesotho utilises the health and safety guiding principle within the Lesotho Labour Law Code of 1992 to ensure health and safety in the workplace. One of the research participants, Paul from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, stated that although there is no national policy regarding occupational health and safety the government of Lesotho has adopted similar goals to that of the Occupational Health and Safety Policy in its formulation stage.

The goals of the Occupational Health and Safety Policy are:

1. To promote and advance at all levels the rights of workers to a safe and healthy working environment;
2. To assess and combat at source occupational risks or hazards;
3. To develop a national preventive safety and health culture that includes information, consultation and training; and
4. To strive to minimise the causes of hazards in the working environment (Alli, 2008).

1.4. Outline of the research problem

Occupational health and safety is of paramount importance in the textile industry, and any other workplace for that matter, as it is vital for workers to work in a clean, safe and healthy environment. The importance of health and safety in the workplace cannot be ignored as good health is a prerequisite for efficient and productive work. However, in the case of Lesotho's textile industry not much is done to ensure clean, safe and healthy working environments. According to Daemane (2014), export-oriented industries in Lesotho are still generally known and characterised by severe exploitation, toxic working environments, unsafe working practices, as well as high job insecurity. Daemane (2014) further argues that the aforementioned nature of the working conditions in the export industries of Lesotho has

affected women's health negatively and it has also increased women's vulnerability to more health hazards.

The Lesotho Times (2012) reported a case that provides compelling evidence as to why the lack of an Occupational Health and Safety Policy in the textile industry of Lesotho must be questioned: A tragic incident of a young man who died under controversial circumstances at a Chinese owned garment manufacturer at Ha-Thetsane in Maseru in 2012. He died after he allegedly inhaled a toxic chemical in a water treatment tank (Lesotho Times, 2012). By and large, the above evidence suggests that in the Lesotho textile industry, health and safety challenges remain a serious issue that needs to be addressed.

Although the aforementioned literature provides a nuance explanation of the Occupational Health and Safety principles, literature which focuses on its performance in the context of the constituents of the textile industry in Lesotho remains non-existent. As such, although there is a dearth of literature on how the guiding principles of Occupational Health and Safety have improved the working conditions of Basotho women employed in the textile industry, an empirical analysis into their lived experience is worthy of study.

1.5. Research Objectives

- To determine the perceptions and experiences of Basotho women working in the Lesotho Precious Garment factory regarding the Occupational Health and Safety principles
- To examine the implementation measures taken by the factory management and Ministry of Labour to ensure the effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory
- To assess the effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety principles in factories of the textile industry of Lesotho.

1.6. Key questions

- What are the perceptions and experiences of Basotho women working in the Lesotho Precious Garments factory regarding Occupational Health and Safety principles?
- What are the measures taken by the factory management and the Ministry of Labour to ensure the effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety principles in the Lesotho Precious Garments factory?

- Are the Occupational Health and Safety principles effectively implemented in factories of the textile industry of Lesotho?

1.7. The significance of the study

Akhter, et al. (2017) assert that research has disregarded women's health problems due to their participation in the textile industry. These authors contend that there is a serious lack of credible conversation when it comes to issues that affect women's health and well-being due to their changing roles. The researcher hopes that this study will contribute to the existing body of literature on health issues that women face due to their participation in the textile industry, as well as how their changing roles have affected their health in general. According to the Labour Law Code of Lesotho (1992), textile industry employers are obligated to follow the Occupational Health and Safety principles to ensure the safety, welfare and health of employees. However, the textile industry in Lesotho provides work environments for women that are not safe, clean or healthy argues Daemane (2014). Rather, Daemane (2014) states that employees in these factories are exposed to various occupational hazards that have negatively affected their health.

The Occupational Health and Safety principles are failing to positively affect the targeted population. Makinde (2005) argues that policy or program deficit occurs when there is lack of basic knowledge on how to execute the policy; when there is lack of commitment and training; and finally when there is lack of knowledge of cause and effect. With this in mind, the researcher hopes that this research will provide insights that will assist in informing future policy-making processes or decisions, particularly regarding the Occupational Health and Safety policy in the textile industry. Furthermore, it is hoped that the recommendations proposed based on the study findings will be implemented by factory managers to improve the working conditions of women workers at the Lesotho Precious Garment factory. Lastly, it is hoped that the research will provide insights that will enhance women workers', factory management and implementers' understanding of the occupational hazards or health issues that are faced by women in the work-place, and make them understand the importance of occupational safety.

1.8. Dissertation Structure

The research is organised as follows:

Chapter one: Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study, taking into consideration issues surrounding the occupational health and safety in factories of the textile industry in Lesotho, and the health issues that affect women workers in these industries. The chapter further presents the research problem as well as the research objectives that are derived from the problem statement. It also highlights the key questions which are used to investigate the study at hand. It further outlines the significance of the study and finally the structure of the dissertation.

Chapter two: Literature review and conceptual framework

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the literature review, as well as the conceptual framework adopted by the study to answer the research questions. Firstly, this chapter will present a review of the existing literature on Occupational Health and Safety policies in the textile industry. Additionally, it will discuss the implementation challenges of Occupational Health and Safety policies in both developing and developed countries. The chapter also focuses on the public policy implementation framework and liberal feminist theory. It further investigates factors affecting the implementation of the principle and lastly, it discusses the liberal feminist argument concerning the study at hand.

Chapter three: Methodology

Chapter three mainly outlines the research methods used to collect data. This study is guided by an evaluative research design and it uses qualitative research methodology. Semi-structured interviews are used to obtain the insight of the participant's perceptions and experiences. The chapter further outlines the sampling technique, the method of data analysis and the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter four: Presentation and discussion of the results

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The study findings will be linked back to the literature review, the research questions, and the conceptual framework.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and recommendations of the study

It presents the conclusions of the research that are derived from the findings that are discussed in chapter four. From these findings, this chapter will propose recommendations that may be helpful in the implementation of Occupational Health and Safety policies in the textile industry of Lesotho.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

Globally, the manufacturing sector is amongst the leading sectors that are said to be contributing towards women's empowerment through employment. Svarer, Meiers and Rothmeir (2017) argue that the sector holds great power and potential to influence the lives of millions of women in developing countries as well as the livelihoods of the families and the communities they live in. Employment in the textile industry could be the first formal employment opportunity granted to the majority of women in developing countries; one important step towards financial liberation and the start of a path out of poverty (Svarer, et al., 2017). The textile sector is confronted by diverse health and safety challenges which include exposure to chemicals, highly controlled and stressful working environments as well as inadequate infrastructure (Akhter, et al., 2017). In as much as men and women are equally affected by these health challenges, women tend to be more vulnerable to the risks than men.

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of the literature review, as well as the conceptual framework adopted by the study to answer the research questions. The chapter will present a detailed review of the existing literature on Occupational Health and Safety policies in the textile industry. Additionally, it will discuss the implementation challenges of Occupational Health and Safety policies in both developing and developed countries. The chapter begins by conceptualising an Occupational Health and Safety policy and further unpacks the challenges faced by women in the textile industry, particularly in the leading industrial countries such as India and Bangladesh and in Lesotho.

2.2. Conceptualising Occupational Health and Safety

An Occupational Health and Safety policy, as argued by Friis (2015), is a statement of strategies for actions recommended to protect the health and safety of workers. Subramani and Somasundaram (2015) share the same sentiments as Friis (2015), arguing that an Occupational Health and Safety policy is primarily concerned with the welfare of workers in that such policy focuses mainly on the prevention of hazards in the workplace. According to Alli (2008), the policy signifies an important strategy that does not only focus on the well-being of workers but also on the matters of positive productivity. Alli (2008) elucidates that

the health, safety, and well-being of workers are mandatory for improvements in quality and productivity and are of utmost importance for equitable and sustainable socio-economic development. Equally important is the idea that the policy aims to protect co-workers, family members, employers, nearby communities and other members of the public who are affected by the workplace (Alli, 2008).

Occupational Health and Safety principles are implemented in the textile industry of Lesotho to ensure clean, safe and without risk to health environments for employees and employers. Svarer, et al. (2017) argue that textile employers have capitalised on supporting factory workers through the implementation of health and safety programs. They put forward that these programs have made improvements, however, there is still much to be done as the apparel sector is challenging, complex and constantly changing. Alli (2008) explains that due to the complex nature of the apparel sector it is important to put in place appropriate legislation and regulations, together with a sufficient means of enforcement. Furthermore, Alli (2008) explains that appropriate legislation and regulations are significant policy instruments for the protection of workers as they form a foundation for efforts to improve working conditions and the working environment. Labour law legislation among others lays down minimum standards which are compulsory and applicable to everyone (Alli, 2008). The textile industry of Lesotho is regulated by the Labour Law Code of 1992. The Labour Law Code (1992) protects both the workers' well-being and that of employers.

2.2.1. Lesotho Labour Law Code of 1992

The Lesotho Labour Law Code (1992, Section 93) stipulates that every employer shall ensure the safety, health and welfare of all of their employees. Furthermore, there shall be provision and maintenance of a conducive working environment for employees; that is, there will be a clean and safe environment, without risks to health and there should be adequate sanitary facilities at work.² The Constitution of Lesotho (1993, Section 30) guarantees that the country shall adopt policies that are aimed at securing just and favorable conditions for women. Policies will address fair wages and equal remuneration for men and women as well as healthy working conditions, particularly for women, during pregnancy and after child birth.³

² Section 93 (2) the Labour Law Code of Lesotho 1992

³ Section 30 the Constitution of Lesotho of 1993

Daemane (2014) and Molapo (2014) argue that irrespective of what the labor law and constitution stipulate, women are still working in harsh conditions in textile factories in Lesotho. They contend that the conditions in the factories of the textile industry in Lesotho are appalling. Molapo (2014) condemns the labour legislation of Lesotho by arguing that it is weak and has many implementation gaps. In the same light, Daemane (2014) is concerned about the health and safety of workers in the textile industry in Lesotho, arguing that the labour legislation of the country seems to be failing the workers. Svarer, et al. (2017) note that the textile or apparel industry is rapidly changing due to new technologies, and for that reason the programs of the past and the old labour law of 1992 may not be as effective today. The authors assert that it is therefore important to formulate new programs and amend the old labour law code, so as to address the changing face of the apparel workforce and workplace (Svarer, et al., 2017).

2.3. The experiences and perceptions of women working in textile industries

Globally, women working in export-oriented industries are exposed to different occupational hazards that negatively affect their health. Babel and Tiwari (2014) put forward that women workers in the apparel sectors are most likely to be exposed to the following hazards; physical, biological, chemical, mechanical, psycho-social and ergonomic hazards.⁴ They explain that the health damage caused by these hazards may be permanent or temporary, depending on the magnitude of exposure to the hazard. Undeniably both men and women workers are negatively affected by these occupational hazards, but women as the vulnerable group are impacted differently by the aforementioned occupational hazards because of their reproductive nature (Akhter, et al., 2017). According to Akhter, et al. (2017), exposure to these occupational hazards can affect women's reproductive health in various ways, for instance; menstrual health, pregnancy, menopause, fertility and sexual functioning. Women's experiences and perceptions will differ, as they work in different divisions, different factories

⁴Physical hazards are the factors within the work environment that can be harmful to the body without necessarily any contact; such hazards are occupational noise, extreme hot and cold temperatures, poor lighting, vibrations, electricity, radiation and confined spaces.

Psycho-social hazards these are hazards that are caused by high job insecurity, difficult working hours, and constant pressure by top management for increased productivity.

Mechanical hazards are those minor accidents that frequently occur due to bad housekeeping. Such accidents are; cutting their fingers, tripping and falling, splashing of chemicals and poor use of protective clothing.

Ergonomic hazards are personal hazards that are caused by dangerous structures and tools in the workplace. Lifting and moving of heavy objects has caused muscular pain in the majority of workers in industrial work.

and do certainly reside in different countries. The literature on women's experiences and perceptions will focus on industrial leaders such as India and Bangladesh, and will also focus on Africa.

2.3.1. India

The apparel sector in India is said to be one of largest sectors which has employed a significant number of women (Patil, 2009). This sector, as argued by Patil (2009), has contributed tremendously towards the economic growth of the country and that of women. According to Singh (2016), women in the textile industry in India engage in different tasks; such as weaving, spinning, tailoring and ironing. There are numerous health risks that are associated with each task. Workers in the textile industry in India are exposed to the following occupational hazards; physical, psycho-social, chemical, ergonomic and biological hazards (Babel and Tawiri, 2014). Patil (2009) and Singh (2016) argue that workers in the spinning and weaving department experience diseases such as asthma and hearing loss due to the dust pollution and noise in this section. Eyayo (2014) argues that time management and work pressure also pose as a health threat to workers. Work in textile factories is stressful; women are put under intense pressure to reach the target, and some even must put in extra hours to reach their target of the day. Irregular, long working hours cause musculoskeletal disorders, sleeping disorders, nervous system and stomach disorders in workers. Singh (2016), on the other hand, associates the stress of the women working in textile factories in India with lack of knowledge. Singh (2016) argues that it is stressful for workers to operate machines that are beyond their understanding. Contrary to this, Klemola and Pearson (2007) argue that the reason that women are under such intense strain is that most of them are hired on a temporary basis. For that reason their contracts may be terminated at any given time, and the anxiety of losing their jobs at any given moment contributes greatly to their stress-related problems.

2.3.2 Bangladesh

The increasing participation of women in industrial work marks a significant change to the economy of Bangladesh. According to Mariani and Valeni (2016), the garment sector of Bangladesh is the leading manufacturing industry in the world and it has been growing constantly. The economy of Bangladesh depends on the work these women do, yet very little is known about the lived experiences of the women workers in these factories. There are

numerous safety issues associated with the textile industry in Bangladesh. The working conditions in the apparel sector of Bangladesh is unsatisfactory and this fact is particularly evident when thinking about recent tragedies such as the Tazreen fashion fire that happened in 2012 and the Rana Plaza collapse that occurred in 2013. In these tragedies thousands of people lost their lives and others were badly injured (Mariani and Valeni, 2016).

Women working in the workplaces in the textile industry of Bangladesh experience psychosocial hazards such as stress, anxiety, headaches and restlessness, according to Akhter, et al. (2017). Babel and Tiwari (2014) and Saha (2014) add that they also experience harassment and sexual abuse from male supervisors, as well as occupational cancers and reproductive illnesses. The reasons behind their experiences, argue Akhter, et al. (2017), are the excessive workloads, highly repetitive work, high-speed tasks and high job insecurity.

Babel and Tiwari (2014) and Singh (2016) argue that the majority of these women also experience hearing loss due to a high level of occupational noise. Spellman and Bierber (2011) argues that the high level of noise in textile factories is dependent on various factors; among them the type of tools and machinery used as well as the manufacturing process involved. Spellman and Bieber (2011) further argue that the machines used in this industry are very much outdated and poorly designed, hence their noisiness. Spellman and Bieber (2011) assert that there is technology that could be used in the industry to reduce the level of noisiness but the factory owners seem to be reluctant to use this technology as it will cost them a lot of money. Factory owners would rather maximise profits than protect the lives of their workers.

Akhter, et al. (2017) contend that not much is being said about women's separation from their children due to industrial work. They state that the majority of these women migrate from rural areas in search of employment in this industry and leave their children behind. The authors provide evidence in their study that women working in the textile industry in Bangladesh experience depression and constant feelings of guilt due to the separation from their children. According to the Akhter, et al. (2017), these women struggle to find meaning without their children and some even have thoughts of suicide.

2.3.3. Focus on Lesotho

The Lesotho textile industry is well-known for severe exploitation, toxic working environments, and high levels of job insecurity (Daemane, 2014). Female workers in the textile industry of Lesotho are exposed to detrimental chemicals, unsafe workplaces, as well as unsafe working practices (Daemane, 2014). The working conditions in these Lesotho factories have raised numerous environmental and labour concerns (Molapo, 2014). The Lesotho Better Work Report (2012) provides evidence that women in the textile industry in Lesotho are exposed to the following hazards: ergonomic, physical and mechanical hazards. The majority of women report having experienced inhalation of chemical fumes due to the continued use of their deteriorating face masks, as well as back pains and needle pricks. Molapo (2014) adds that workers in these factories also complain about poor ventilation, unhygienic washrooms and verbal abuse from management. Daemane (2014) and Molapo (2014) further argue that pregnant women are badly treated. They put forward that pregnant women are not given lighter duties, they stand on their feet for a long time and if they fail to come to work due to pregnancy complications their wages are deducted. Molapo (2014) even contends that some factory owners fire women who show any signs of pregnancy. Lastly, the women in these factories experience excessive heat as the factory ventilation is often insufficient to ensure comfort, causing some to pass out. Conversely they also experience extreme cold in snowy winters as these factories do not have heaters (Lesotho Better Work, 2012).

2.4. Measures taken to ensure the effectiveness of Occupational Health and Safety policies in the textile industry

Workers have the right to work in an environment which is safe and is not harmful to their health. Workers should be protected from sickness and any injury arising from the workplace (Alli, 2008). Occupational accidents occur daily in export-oriented industries, and most of these accidents have contributed towards the thousands of lost lives and serious injuries (Clean Clothes Campaign, 2012). Safety and health measures should thus be taken into consideration by factory owners and by the government to promote safety and health in the workplace. When formulating and implementing preventive measures in the textile industry it is vital to first find factors that have the potential to cause harm and to identify workers who may be exposed to these hazards. Policy implementers should also take into consideration the issue of gender when implementing the Occupational Health and Safety policy. It is worth

remembering that there may be differences in the exposure of women to risks compared to that of males, therefore gender-sensitive interventions should involve the concerned workers (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, n.d.). Monitoring and evaluation should be done at regular intervals to ensure safety and the Occupational Health and Safety policy should be revised whenever significant changes occur in the workplace or following an accident (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, n.d.).

The majority of accidents that have occurred in the textile industry could have been prevented if proper regulations and systems were put in place. However, the accidents in this industry that are documented show that regulations and systems are not very common. Factors such as old and badly maintained equipment, faulty electrics, and locked, blocked and inadequate escape exits have caused death and serious injuries around the world in this industry (Adidas Group, 2010). It is important to note that the nature and extent of Occupational Health and Safety policies will differ from one country to another, due to economic differences and the technological and social circumstances in each country (Alli, 2008). Accidents and diseases, including fatal ones, are said to occur more frequently in certain occupations and sectors than in others. Different countries and factories implement diverse occupational measures that address the Occupational Health and Safety problems they face as a country or a factory. Below are the general preventive measures taken by a factory's management to ensure Occupational Health and Safety in the textile industry.

2.4.1. Training

Calvin and Joseph (2006) explains that the majority of the accidents that occur in the textile industry around the world occur due to illiteracy and unskilled labour. It is important that factory workers are trained and taught about emergency preparedness in cases of industrial fires, as industrial fires present the greatest risk of loss of life and destruction of property in factories. In response to accidents happening in textile factories, Lesotho factory owners have implemented safety measures in the workplace. This decision is informed by the Lesotho Better Work (2013) report, which notes that in 2013 a seminar on fire and safety was held for three factories. The aim of the seminar was to discuss the cause and prevention of fire in textile factories, to enlighten the workers on the role of fire marshals, fire risk reduction and to provide training to employees. Training of staff is of paramount importance in any organisation, as employees need to enhance their knowledge of the ever-changing nature of

their work. Staff must be properly trained to use the complex and new technology in the factories (Sobuj, 2011).

2.4.2. Inspection

The Ministry of Labour ensures the effective implementation of Occupational Health and Safety policies in the export industries of Lesotho by conducting regular inspections and surveys. The department provides training to labour inspectors on an ad hoc basis. Alli (2008, p.61) states that “labour inspectors should be provided with adequate resources, training and knowledge. Furthermore, they should have an effective presence at the workplace, [and] be capable of taking important action by being severe or persuasive”. However, the International Labour Organisation (2017) report notes that the labour inspectors in the textile industry in Lesotho have little knowledge about Occupational Health and Safety policies, therefore, they require more training. Awan (2001) adds that lack of knowledge and training are not the only factors contributing to the occupational accidents in the textile industry in the different countries. Awan (2001) argues that factors such as lack or poor government policies and poor tripartite cooperation, poor occupational health and services, as well as poor safety cultures have contributed largely towards occupational accidents in the textile industry. The existing system in the Lesotho Labour Department is particularly weak in the task of promoting the prevention of occupational accidents and diseases, and this claim is informed by the International Labour Organisation (2017), which further notes that the labour inspectors perform their duties based on the orientation provided by their colleagues, therefore they lack sufficient knowledge and training. All the above-mentioned factors have contributed to the implementation deficit of an Occupational Health and Safety policy in the textile industry in Lesotho.

2.4.3. Good housekeeping

The majority of accidents occurring worldwide in the textile industry happen due to bad housekeeping. Calvin and Joseph (2006) explain that unwanted and wanted materials are often lying around and this leads to tripping and falling of workers. Ahmed, et al. (1998) explain the importance of good housekeeping and they state that the working environment needs to be kept as clean and dry as possible to prevent the abovementioned accidents. Ahmed, et al. (1998) further argue that it is vital to always have signs informing workers of damp and wet floors. According to Simelane (2008), emergency exits in textile factories are

frequently locked and blocked and the author perceives this as a health threat to workers, particularly in times of fire emergencies. Exit passages and staircases must never be blocked with obstacles and all stairs should have handrails. Furthermore, proper lighting and ventilation needs to be ensured and machinery must be well maintained to avoid accidents (Ahmed, et al., 1998). Many accidents in textile factories are also caused by poor use of protective devices but most importantly by the lack of a safety culture on the part of both employees and employers.

2.4.4. Provision of protective clothing

Exposure to dust, dyes, and chemicals can arise from dye handling, poor storage conditions, damaged containers, spillages and from dust which has previously settled in the workplace. There needs to be minimal exposure to hazardous substances and this can be achieved by providing quality protective clothing to workers. According to Ahmed, et al. (1998), exposure to physical and chemical hazards in export-oriented industries can be reduced by providing workers with protective gear; this may include gloves, safety glasses, dust masks and aprons. Workers can avoid eye injuries by using proper protection such as safety glasses and by having adequate light to prevent straining of their eyes.

2.5. Conceptual Framework

This research will make use of the liberal feminist theory as well as the public policy implementation framework to understand the factors that influence the implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Makinde (2005) states that policies are implemented to have a positive impact on the targeted population in a society, thus the principle of Occupational Health and Safety has been implemented in the textile industry of Lesotho to improve the harsh working conditions of workers. However, common arguments in the literature give emphasis to the disparity between the stated policy goals and the implementation outcomes. The policy implementation process cannot be separated from the agenda setting and the formulating stages as they have a direct impact on how the implementation proceeds. Therefore, it is important for the policy problem and the policy objectives to be clearly defined and understood (Woolman, 1981).

2.6. Agenda setting

Agenda setting is the first and most important stage in the policy process. It is in this phase where policy problems are initially identified, and different solutions are put forward by

policy actors (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009). Howlett, Ramesh and Perl (2009) argue that the way problems are recognised or identified, if at all, has an impact on how the policy actors will address the policy problem. It is worth noting that problem recognition is socially constructed, therefore what may appear as a problem for certain individuals may not appear as a problem for other people (Howlett, Ramesh and Perl, 2009). There are numerous societal problems but only a small number can be afforded the attention of the legislator and executives. Factors that determine whether an issue reaches the agenda may be cultural, political, socio-economic or ideological (Birkland, 2015). Policy actors such as interest groups, mass media, judges and public officials play an important role in agenda setting as these actors can influence decisions on policies concerning them at each stage of the policy (Khali, 2009).

2.7. Policy formulation

Subsequent to problem recognition is deliberation by the different policy actors on solving the various societal problems. These policy actors focus mainly on the type of activities government can undertake, as well as the policy instruments that can be used in crafting solutions for public and private problems. Policy formulation, therefore, involves the identifying and evaluating of possible solutions to policy problems (Anderson, 2014). It is in this stage that policy makers ask if the problem is fully conceptualised, and if the objectives are clearly defined and understood. It is important to understand that not fully understanding the policy problem and having vague objectives will affect the formulation process and ultimately the carrying out process (Wolman, 1981). Bhuyan, Jorgensen and Sharma (2010) put forward that when formulating policies, policy actors should take into consideration the nature and the scope of the policy and factors such as social norms and gender inequality, as well as governing process such as delegation as they have a great impact on the success of the policy. Grindle (2017) argues that decisions that are made in the formulation stage have a significant impact on the implementation process. Therefore, decisions made or not made about the type of policy to be pursued and the type of programs to be implemented are essential factors in determining how successful the program will be.

2.8. Public Policy Implementation

Howlett (2012) argue that policy implementation is the stage in a policy cycle whereby policy decisions are translated into action. Anderson (2014) describes the policy implementation process as the lawful action taken by the government and private individuals to achieve the

desired goals that were set earlier in policy decisions. According to Mazmanian and Sabatier (1980, p.539), “implementation is rather an execution of a basic policy decision, usually incorporated in a statute but which can also take the form of important executive decisions. Ideally, that decision identifies the problems to be addressed, stipulates the objectives to be pursued and in a variety of ways structures the implementation processes”. The implementation process can only begin when the general goals and objectives have been specified. The success or failure of implementation can be evaluated in terms of the ability to deliver programs as designed or measuring program outcomes against policy goals.

2.8.1. Determinants of implementation success

2.8.1.1. *Concept one: Lack of resources*

In the process of implementing policies or programs human and financial resources must be reserved. The implementing department or the Ministry must be allocated sufficient funds to successfully execute the program or the policy. The vast majority of policies or programs have failed in the implementation stage due to lack of human and financial resources (Makinde, 2005). Mthethwa (2012) argues that often the government fails to budget adequately, hence it becomes difficult for bureaucrats to implement policies effectively. Mthethwa (2012) further argues that in most cases the problem is wrong allocation of funds. Governments tend to redistribute funds to departments that have a greater financial need, thus causing the failure of other departments’ policies or programs.

2.8.1.2. *Concept two: Political uncertainty*

According to Mattozzi (2008, p.), political uncertainty “is a pervasive phenomenon which is inherent to the political process. It naturally arises because different candidates running for office, if elected, will implement different policies”. Paudel (2009) argues that political uncertainty weakens the policy-making and the implementation process of the policy or the program. Leaders in developing nations come up with good policies with the aim of improving the lives of citizens in the different sectors of government, however, it becomes quite impossible to effectively execute these policies because with a change of government there comes change in policy (Makinde, 2005).

2.8.1.3. Concept three: Communication

Communication is a crucial contributing factor for effective implementation. It is through communication that orders to execute policies are expected to be passed on to the appropriate personnel in a clear manner (Makinde, 2005). According to Spratt (2009), implementing personnel will gain better knowledge and understanding of the policy being implemented through the adequate distribution of information. Information will include technical knowledge of the matter at hand and levels and patterns of communication between actors. The majority of policies fail due to inadequate and inaccurate information (Spratt, 2009). Inadequate information can lead to misunderstanding on the part of the implementers who may be confused as to what exactly is required of them (Makinde, 2005).

2.8.1.4. Concept four: Commitment

According to Brynard (2009), commitment is considered as the core construct of policy implementation. Commitment is directly dependent on upon co-ordination of all actors involved in the implementation stage (Brynard, 2009). Commitment is described by Brynard (2009) as maintaining focus from beginning to end. Commitment during the policy process must endure till the stated policy objectives are achieved. However, commitment fails due to deferred policy decisions. Commitment is not only important in the implementation stage but rather at all levels through which the policy passes. Policy goals can be clearly defined and adequate resources provided but if those responsible for carrying it out are unwilling or unable to do so, little will happen to the implementation of that particular policy (Brynard, 2005).

2.8.1.5. Concept five: Stakeholder participation

Mthethwa (2012) argues that successful policy processes require authentic public participation where policy makers and the public continually engage in discussion about issues that affect and benefit them. In the process of policy making all concerned stakeholders are included for a successful participation, and failure to incorporate all concerned stakeholders may introduce biasness in the subsequent stages of the process (Mthethwa, 2012). Participation of all concerned stakeholders is of primary importance in the policy process as it allows the public to have a voice about what is important to them and also to influence and take decisions about matters concerning their lives.

2.8.1.5. Concept six: Training

Brynard (2009) argues that the training of workers can no longer be ignored as it has a direct impact on the success of any implemented policy. Although training is certainly not the only factor that contributes to successful policy implementation, it is important that workers are offered training in the workplace as this will increase their self-efficiency and their confidence in their daily work duties. Implementers are more likely to proceed if they feel confident in their ability to overcome possible barriers transforming an intention into practice (Brynard, 2009).

2.8.1.6. Implementation approaches:

2.8.1.7. Top-down approach

Matland (1995, p.3) states that with the top-down approach “the starting point is the authoritative decision, as the name implies, [and] centrally located actors are seen as [the] most relevant to producing the desired effect”. Paudel (2009) argues that the top-down process begins at the top, with a clear statement of the intent and further continues through a cycle of more specific steps to define what is expected from implementers at each level. For better success of the implementation of the law addressing the problem, the top-down theorists argue that policy goals need to be clear and consistent, and policy implementers should have knowledge of cause and effect, a clear hierarchy of power, and lastly there should be adequate resources to execute the implementation process (Birkland, 2015). However, the top-down approach is condemned for placing too much emphasis on clear objectives without having consensus on what the actual goals of the program are. Hood and Gunn (1978) contend that the approach puts a lot of emphasis on the definition of goals and human interaction, as well as on behaviour, and by doing this all consideration of how real people behave is excluded.

Mothae and Sindane (2007) argue that when executing policies, there must be skilled bureaucrats or offices vested with the authority and responsibility to implement such a policy. Given that Lesotho does not yet have a policy or a law but there is a guiding principle that enforces Health and Safety in the workplace. The Occupational Health and Safety principle in Lesotho is implemented in a top-down manner; the process begins at the top and goes down to the grassroots level. The Ministry of Labour is given the responsibility to effectively carry out the principle to improve Health and Safety in the textile industry of Lesotho.

2.8.1.8. Bottom-up approach

Elmore (1979, pp. 601-616) argues that “the bottom-up approach starts with the identification of actors involved in concrete policy delivery at the bottom and the analysis will move upwards and sideways in order to identify the networks, implementing actors and their problem-solving strategies”. The bottom-up approach, unlike the top-down approach, does not begin with a governmental program but rather with an actor’s perceived problems and the strategies developed for dealing with them. The approach can assess the important range of government programs and private organisations in solving the problem (Matland, 1995). Bottom-up theorists argue that implementation is best understood when it’s viewed through the eyes of the target population and the services delivered. One of strengths of this approach is the fact that the resources are directed to the affected group, as the target groups are the actual implementers. Moreover, there is use of local knowledge and the benefit of this is the fact that different actors are drawn in with their knowledge and professional roles (Matland, 1995).

The bottom-up approach emphasises the fact that street level bureaucrats play an important role in ensuring the performance of a policy (Lipsky, 1980). Paudel (2009) argues that it is important that street-level bureaucracies feel ownership of the policy as they should be included in each and every important stage of the policy. Additionally, the bottom-up theorists argue that policy problems should be studied at the micro-level, questioning the micro-level actors about their problems, possible solutions, goals, as well as activities, as this will assist in mapping a network that identifies the relevant implementation structure for that stated policy issue.

2.9. Liberal feminism

The liberal feminists are of the argument that the modernisation process of development has a negative impact on women (Baden and Reeves, 2000). The primary concern of liberal feminists is the economic and social issues of women in the workplace. They argue that women are exposed to severe exploitation, harsh working conditions, subordination and high economic insecurities (Baden and Reeves, 2000). According to Connelly, MacDonald and Parpart (2000) liberal feminists put forward that women undeniably had to be incorporated into the development process through gaining access to employment and the marketplace,

however, they argue that for women to be fully integrated into development it requires more effort than just the mere creation of job opportunities. Most importantly it requires a conducive working environment for both women and men so that they can seize the opportunities that development has to offer. Connelly, MacDonald and Parpart (2000) argue that this kind of environment requires good governance that will provide equality for both women and men when it comes to decision making. Extensive literature shows that there are approaches that are formulated in order to incorporate women in the process of development, such programs being; Women in Development, Women and Development and Gender and Development. However, liberal feminists argue that the formulation of the abovementioned programs does not address more important issues such as exploitation, the harsh working conditions and high job insecurity among women (Connelly, MacDonald and Parpart, 2000).

It is an undeniable fact that the industrial sector has brought about remarkable change to the economy of the leading industrial countries. The majority of the unskilled and uneducated women in these countries have gained their financial freedom through this sector. Nonetheless, it is also through this sector that women are exposed to harsh working conditions, toxic environments, exploitation and high job insecurity. Women working in the textile industry are exposed daily to occupational hazards that negatively affect their health. Women need to work in an environment that is clean, safe and without risk to their health.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter gives an outline of the research design and research methods that were used to guide the study. It further gives a detailed discussion on the ethical issues that were considered during field work. Research sample, sampling, and validity are discussed in this chapter.

3.2. Research design

Sarantakos (2005) explains that research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between the research questions and the execution of the research. Research design offers clarity and order in the process of conducting research, thus allowing a researcher to foresee and prevent any kind of errors (Sarantakos, 2005). The research design is of primary importance in research as it enables the researcher to make decisions on how the participants will be selected, and on how data will be collected and analysed (Kumar, 2011). This study is evaluative as it seeks to assess the effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety policy at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Evaluative research seeks to assess the merit of programs or policies implemented, and this type of research attempts to provide information about various aspects of the implemented policy, such as whether the proposed policy or intervention has achieved its anticipated goals (Babbie and Mouton, 2010). Furthermore, evaluative research attempts to make judgements about the implemented policies, to improve the policy effectiveness or to inform decisions about the future policies (De Vos, 2005).

3.3. Methodology and methods

Babbie and Mouton (2008) describe research methodology as a general principle that guides the research study. Research methodology primarily focuses on the research process and the research tools to be used. Bryman (2012) argues that research methodology is a research technique for collecting data, using specific instruments. This study employed qualitative research methods to collect data. According to Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2007), qualitative research attempts to deepen our understanding of the social world as it explores human experiences, their attitudes, opinions, history as well as their different behaviours in

their natural setting. This study used semi-structured interviews to gather information on the experiences, attitudes as well as opinions of women working at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory.

3.3. Sampling and sample technique

Initially, the researcher wanted to interview 15 participants but only 11 participants were available. The 11 participants were purposively selected with the help of their factory supervisor who was the key informant. With purposive sampling, the sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attribute of the population (Denscombe, 2007). The advantage of using this method of sampling is that it ensures that each element of the sample will assist with the research because the research participants are selected on the basis that they have knowledge of the subject matter and they are in the best position to answer the research questions. This study chose women as the unit of analysis because the researcher sought to investigate the negative health impacts that were brought about by women's participation in industrial work, namely: how the occupational hazards (exposure to chemicals, vibrations, and stressful and repetitive work) in this particular factory had affected the women's reproductive systems and their health in general. The study recruited women from the age of 20-50 years; these women were known to have been working in this factory for a minimum of three years and the assumption was that they would have in-depth knowledge about the experiences and challenges of working at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory.

3.4. Methods of Data Collection

To understand the experiences, attitudes and opinions of the women working in the textile industry semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions and literature reviews were used as instruments to gather qualitative data. Literature from international and local countries that had focussed on the experiences of women working in the textile industry was critically reviewed. Secondary sources used to gain insights into the experiences and perceptions of women working in the textile industry included journal articles, books and dissertations.

Semi-structured face-to-face interviews were conducted at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. The researcher utilised semi-structured interviews because these kinds of interviews allowed the researcher to probe a participant's view for clarification and by doing so the

participant was able to provide clear and detailed information. The researcher only knew the supervisor that was assigned by the Human Resources department to assist with the interviews. Through the supervisor who knew all the participants, the researcher was able to interview women workers from the age of 20-50 years who had been working in this factory for more than three years. Participants were given a chance to choose between English and Sesotho and all of them chose Sesotho, hence all the interviews were primarily in Sesotho.⁵ Participants were interviewed while working, the majority of the interviews were recorded as permission was granted, however, three participants were not comfortable with being recorded so notes were taken in this instance.

3.5. Data analysis

To analyse the collected data content thematic analysis was used. According to Babbie and Mouton (2008), content analysis is a method used to examine the content or information and symbols contained in written documents. Babbie and Mouton (2008) further explain that to conduct a content analysis, the researcher needs to identify a body of material to analyse and then create a system for recording specific aspects for its content. The first step in analysing was for the researcher to first familiarise themselves with the gathered data by reading written notes and listening to the tape records repeatedly. While reading and listening the researcher was able to identify patterns or themes of experiences of the women working in this factory. Data was then presented using themes.

3.6. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important aspects of research. Validity in research is concerned with the accuracy and truthfulness of scientific findings. Brink (1993) argues that truthfulness of responses is important when data is collected using interviews, as biasness could be introduced due to the responses or characteristics of the participants. Before interviews were conducted the researcher explained in detail the purpose of the study and why it was being conducted. This was done to avoid biased information or responses that were not truthful, as participants may have given biased answers, thus making the situation in the textile industry seem worse or better than it was. They may even have feared giving negative responses as they thought they might lose their jobs. In qualitative research, Brink (1993) states that sample selection is based on the ability of the subjects to provide data relevant to the research

⁵ Sesotho is the national language of Lesotho

questions. The researcher purposively selected participants who had knowledge of the subject matter hence they were able to respond precisely to the questions asked by the researcher. Furthermore, to ensure validity the researcher compared the findings of the interviews with those of the preliminary literature and the questions that were asked during data collection were in line with the conceptual framework of the study.

3.7. Ethical issues

Ethics in social research are those principles that provide guidance when conducting research. In consideration of ethical principles, the researcher firstly obtained informed permission for the research from the management of the Lesotho Precious Garments factory which allowed them to enter the premises and collect data. Furthermore, authorisation was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Higher Degree Committee.

Throughout this study the researcher was mindful of protecting the participants, and the researcher did not harm the participants or place their jobs in any danger by conducting the interviews. Workers in the textile industry are put under intense pressure to reach their daily target and for this reason the researcher interviewed them while they were working, so that they did not have to work extra hours to make up for the lost time or even potentially lose their jobs because they did not reach their daily target. Neuman (2013) argues that it is ethically correct that people have knowledge of what they are being asked to participate in. Using informed consent, the researcher provided participants with full information about the study. The participants were also given the chance to inquire about their concerns. While reading the informed consent document to each participant the researcher explained that participation was voluntary, and it could be terminated at any given point if they wished to do so.

The researcher further explained the procedure as well as the time duration for the interview. According to Denscombe (2012), it is unethical for a researcher to coerce or deceive the subjects into participating. The researcher strived to work with honesty, respect, and dignity towards the participants. None of the participants were forced or deceived into participating. The researcher made it clear from the beginning that the research was for academic purposes and for that reason no rewards or any financial compensation would be awarded to the participants.

Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The participants' identities were not linked with the information; instead the researcher assigned pseudonyms to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality.

3.8. Study limitations

3.8.1 Availability of participants

Only two people from the management team were interviewed (supervisors). Chinese owners of this factory were not available for the interview as they claimed to be busy with orders. The researcher believes that information from the owners could have enriched the data as they would have offered a different perspective on the topic.

3.8.2. Resources

The interviews were conducted over two days due to the unavailability of the participants. The researcher thus had to travel for two days to conduct the interviews and this exhausted the financial resources of the researcher. Time was also a factor, the researcher was cautious of time because the participants were still on duty, however, the researcher believes that if more time was given for these interviews more insightful information could have been provided by participants.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Findings and Discussion

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will present and discuss the results of the study. The chapter is divided into three sections. Section one will discuss the general working conditions at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Section two investigates the compliance and safety measures taken by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the factory management to ensure safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Lastly, section three discusses the implementation challenges regarding the Occupational Health and Safety principles in the textile industry of Lesotho.

4.2. Working Conditions

The textile industry is known and characterised by its toxic environment and exploitive nature. This industry has been generally condemned for having poor or unacceptable working conditions as workers in this industry have been exposed to toxic and hazardous conditions that have increased their susceptibility to health problems (Gangully, 2015). The term ‘working conditions’ is very broad and is often applied to different circumstances. In this section of the analysis working conditions will refer to issues such as working hours, rest periods, daily targets, the nature of the work, harassment, physical conditions and mental demands that exist in this factory. This section will discuss in detail the working conditions at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. It will further examine the occupational injuries that women workers experience in this factory and lastly compensation for work related injuries and diseases will be discussed.

It is unquestionable that the working conditions in which thousands of women are employed are unsatisfactory. Poor working conditions in the textile industry are an everyday problem, as employees in this industry are faced with issues such as unsafe working practices, long working hours, low monthly wages, and physical and sexual harassment. Hancock, et al. (2016, p.3) assert that “Women in these factories are subjected to unreasonable workloads, time-frames and expectations. They are subjected to poor environmental conditions and exploited to work long hours without remuneration. They experience inadequate income and

support which is typified by poor living accommodations and they are also subjected to instances of sexual and physical abuse”.

Gathering information on poor working conditions at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory was a challenge since the participants preferred to share only positive views about their employers. Gangully (2015, p.15) states that “workers in textile industries fear losing their jobs if they publicly complain about poor working conditions and violations of labor rights.” The majority of the female workers, when asked about the working conditions at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory, claimed that the conditions were not bad at all. This was similar to the study by O’Reilly, De Cock and Mahendran (2015) as women from the Lesotho Precious Garments factory shared their satisfaction with their working conditions; some even went to the extent of saying that their working conditions were not bad at all. While most women were ‘satisfied’ with the working conditions, some shared the challenges that they faced on a daily basis. Having established a rapport with the women, more unsatisfactory views were gathered.

Gangully (2015) states that working in the textile industry can be challenging, particularly for women workers as they were faced with physical and sexual harassment from their male counterparts and the factory owners. While participants shared that thus far they had not been harassed sexually by any of their male co-workers, they did experience physical harassment from the factory owners. One of the participants stated that if they failed to reach their minimum hourly production target of 150 pieces, they were insulted or slapped by the factory owners.

There is a lot of harassment in this factory, not from our male counterparts though but from the Chinese owners. They insult us every day when we fail to meet the hourly target and at times they even klap us (Thato).

Similarly, Lehakoe also shared that she had been shouted at and struck three times by the factory owners as she had failed to reach the hourly minimum target. She further explained that sometimes they were threatened with losing their jobs because they had failed to meet the targets. The question of physical punishment was asked in every interview and most of the women preferred not to respond to it, often saying “that was a sensitive question” and in honouring research ethics the researcher chose not to probe further. However, those who were able to respond shared that their fellow workers did not like to comment or say anything

when they were “punished” as they feared losing their jobs. Participants even went to the extent of saying:

We don't talk about the punishments because the bosses sometime hit us when no one is around so we just continue working as if nothing happened. Besides, no one wants to be known as the klapped woman (Lehakoe).

The above excerpts were examples of the challenges faced by women and how vulnerable they could be in factory working conditions. Factory working conditions were also characterised by long working hours. While this was the norm in the male-dominated production industries, it has proven to be problematic for women. A study by Saleem (2015) reports that “the long and irregular working hours make it difficult for women to combine family responsibilities with work”. Women working in textile factories are constantly under intense working pressure due to the high quantity of orders received in these factories. They are forced to work overtime to fulfill the unreasonable workload demands (Torkelsen, 2017). According to Opondo (2009), workers in the textile industry normally work eight to twelve hours per day but due to the workloads they are forced to work an extra four to six hours per day, depending on the scale of the orders that the factory has received at that particular time.

During the interviews, all participants shared their dissatisfaction with working the long hours. Mosa explained that they worked long intense hours; nonetheless stating that their main predicament was that they had been promised salary increases by the management, but that nothing in this regard had happened thus far. The vast majority of these workers were working overtime as a way of earning enough to survive, however, they had been deceived by their employers about their income and the terms of the extra work. Opondo (2009, p.10) reports:

Workers complained that worse than the compulsory and excessive overtime is inadequate payment. Typically, they said that the compensation that they get is not commensurate with the number of overtime hours worked. Thus, it is common that for a worker to be adequately compensated one has to extend either sexual or monetary favours toward the supervisor.

Ahmed and Raihan (2014) have also found that excessive workloads, extended working hours and extreme and unrealistic working pressures negatively affect the lives and the health

of workers in the textile industry. Additionally they face the constant threat of wage or even job losses for failing to meet these unrealistic targets set by their employers. All of these physical and mental pressures result in these industry workers having an increased vulnerability to health problems such as; headaches, fatigue, heart disease, stress and fainting (Ahmed and Raihan, 2014).

Lehakoe from the sewing section complained about the workload and the health impacts it bore on them. She stated that she often suffered from back pains, frustration and headaches because of the workload and the pressure to complete her hourly target of 150 items per hour. Thato from the ironing department and other participants from the cutting and stitching department stated that they carried out all of their duties while standing. That is, the cutting of fabrics, stitching and ironing of the garments. Thato expressed her sentiments about the issue of standing the whole day, arguing that the majority of their tasks could be done while sitting and that they could actually do more while sitting down because they were comfortable.

You know, it's unfair that we have to stand all day, these people treat us like we are robots, but we are not. You see, the job can be done sitting down, in fact I know we can do way more if we are sitting down because we will be more comfortable (Thato).

Kefuoe from the cutting section shared the same sentiments as Thato, agreeing that all of their tasks could be done while sitting. Kefuoe expanded further by stating that it would be better if they were given a choice between sitting and standing as they were both tiring, instead of being forced to stand or sit the whole day.

I prefer to stand when I am tired of sitting, this will not affect production but we as workers will be happy and so we will produce perfect garments (Kefuoe).

They further explained that workers from other departments, like the sewing and washing departments, carried out their work duties while sitting down. Mosa from the washing section and Limpho from the sewing section however complained about the poor ergonomic design of the tables, stating that the tables were too high so it became difficult and exhausting for them to work while sitting. Mosa further stated that they sometimes stood in order for them to be on the same level as the tables.

Lu (2011) attests that because of the prolonged periods of standing in textile industry workers tend to experience musculoskeletal disorders such as leg cramps, back pain and carpal tunnel syndrome. Health issues were echoed by all study participants during the interviews, as they also experienced leg cramps and back pains. In addition, Kamohelo from the finishing or ironing section further complained that worse than standing all day was the fact that they were not provided with mats to stand on. She stated that due to the lack of mats they experienced health problems such as the flu and in extreme cases, even arthritis.

The problem is we do not have mats that we can stand on and this has affected our health negatively as we suffer from flu, leg cramps and arthritis. However, when sewing we do sit and sitting down the whole day is not an issue as we are used to it (Kamohelo).

Figure 4.1: Factory workers standing while working



We stand the whole day on cold floors. There is no comfort whatsoever. We experience problems with our feet; our feet get swollen and we have leg cramps. Most of us suffer from arthritis, but we are still working because there is nothing we can do (Keamohetsoe).

Ithabeleng shares the same sentiments with Keamohetsoe and Kamohelo by explaining that standing on cold floors has indeed negatively affected their health and, in turn, their economic status as many of the women had had to resign and go back home because of their illness (arthritis).

Workers in the textile factories in Lesotho experienced harsh cold winters and extremely hot summers. Rodalh (2003) contends that the cold and hot temperatures experienced by workers in the textile industry not only affect their health; it also affects their physical performance at work. The author expands, stating that in summer workers do not work to their full potential due to heat stress as most of the workers are very sleepy, lack concentration and tend to pass out due to the excessive heat. In winter, workers can hardly move their hands to work because of the numbness in their fingers, hands and lower body caused by the cold. Sobuj (2011) opines that it is of primary importance that factory owners give precedence to their workers' health and comfort by installing proper ventilation and heaters. Sobuj (2011) explains that proper ventilation will reduce the heat in these factories, particularly in summer, whereas heaters will assist in keeping the place warm in winter. This practice will ensure the workers' comfort and good health and thus aid productivity.

Apart from standing the whole day, some of the participants explained that it was very cold in this factory. They stated that the place was extremely cold in winter and extremely hot in summer and that with those kinds of temperatures it became difficult for them to work. Participants added that as there were no heaters in this factory, they had to find their own means to protect themselves against the cold in winter. Consider the following excerpts:

I will give you a simple example, this place is extremely cold in winter and you know how cold it gets here at home. Since I got here in 2001, we have been complaining about the fact that there are no heaters, and nothing has been done up to date. For

summer, we do have air conditioners, but we hardly feel [them]. It's just two of them in this big hall with so many people, so we need more (Thato).

Another participant (Mosa) narrated that:

We try to put on as much clothes as we can and drink hot water, but I do not want to lie to you and say we do not feel the cold... We do but there is nothing we can do. We need this job and we cannot go anywhere, as we do not have the right qualifications, so we have to work (Mosa).

Participants from the previously mentioned sections were not the only ones to complain about the harsh working conditions. Malerato and other participants from the washing section also complained about the fact that they worked in an open space all year round. She explained that winters were unbearable as it was extremely cold in that open space.

It is very cold here. There are no heaters and as you can see, we work in an open space. We work in this open space throughout the year; you can just imagine in winter [as] we both know how cold it gets (Malerato).

This sentiment was further corroborated thus:

We work in this open space all year round. It is very cold in winter and hot in summer. Our main problem is in winter as it gets very cold here... If only the factory owners can provide us with heaters or move us to a closed room..., [I] am certain it is warmer there (Palesa).

From the narratives above, it could be concluded that the participants strongly felt that their working conditions would be better if the abovementioned factors were taken into consideration. They felt that they should be given a choice between standing and sitting down while working. Furthermore, they explained that it would be better if they were provided with heaters and proper ventilation and lastly, they should be given the promised wages as per their agreement with the factory owners. Apart from the issues pertaining to standing and sitting down, noise was also cited as a major issue for the participants.

Talapatra and Rahman (2016) attest that exposure to noise is often disregarded by factory owners due to fact that its effects take time to be visible and there is an absence of pain. They explain that exposure to noise may impair the eardrum and cause temporary or permanent hearing loss. Apart from damage to hearing, Abbasi, Marri and Nebhwani (2011) propose that exposure to noise in the workplace may reduce the workers' ability to concentrate, and further contend that high levels of noise in the workplace cause annoyance as oral communication is difficult. Lastly, these authors explain that workers in the textile industry occasionally experience headaches due to the high level of noise caused by the machinery and tools used in the industry (Abbasi, Marri and Nebhwani, 2011). Noise pollution in export-oriented industries is dependent on various factors, for instance, the type of tools and machinery used as well as the manufacturing process itself (Spellman and Bierber, 2011). The machines used in these industries are usually outdated and poorly designed, hence the noise pollution in these industries.

Participants from the washing and the sewing sections explained that they used old machinery and tools that were very noisy, thus it was very loud in these departments. Mosa from the washing department also complained about the age of the hand machines used, explaining that they required a lot of effort to use and were very noisy. Mosa also reported hearing loss as a consequence of using these items.

It is not pleasant at all to work in this section (washing section); there is a lot of work to be done. To do our work we use the hand machines that you see, because they are too old they require us to use too much effort. These machines are very old, and they are too loud, and we have not been provided with earplugs (Mosa).

More participants were probed about the negative effects of the industrial noise on their health. Participants from the sewing and washing sections were more willing to share information on this subject since they were the ones who constantly used these machines. Lehakoe from the sewing department claimed that as a result of being exposed to the industrial noise she was partially deaf. She explained that she has been exposed to this kind of noise since 2000 and that this had affected her hearing and her life in general. In addition, Kamohelo from the washing section also stated that when she was at home or in a public

place she normally talked in a loud manner because she was used to shouting when she was at work, adding that her family said it was because of the noisy conditions she worked in.

The working conditions at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory are severe and difficult for women. Workers in this factory are confronted with various challenges such as long working hours, heavy workloads, and physical and verbal abuse from the factory owners. The participants complained about not being paid on time, the long working hours and standing on their feet the entire day. They stated that they had leg and back pains and arthritis because of the workload and the standing. Some participants stated that they were partially deaf because of the industrial noise they were exposed to. It was thus evident from the narratives that heavy workloads, long working hours, industrial noise and a high level of pressure at work had negatively impacted the health of the participants and their lives in general.

4.2.1. Occupational injuries and safety

Employees in the textile industry are prone to both minor and major accidents, and these industrial accidents suffered are the main reason for the loss of life, physical injuries and economic problems that occur in textile factories (Yilmaz and Alp, 2016). According to Calvin and Joseph (2006), workers in factories in the textile industry are prone to minor injuries to their fingers in the form of bruising and cuts, and more serious loss of these digits, as a result of their fingers and hands getting trapped in the machinery that they work with. They assert that the abovementioned accidents come about as a result of bad house-keeping, the lack of a safety culture on the part of both the employees and employers and the lack of use of proper protective clothing.

Serinken, et al. (2012), in the same light, argue that the main reason workers suffer occupational injuries in textile factories is due to carelessness, improper physical conditions in the workplace, untidiness, and the lack of sufficient protective clothing. They elucidate that workers in textile factories are more likely to experience the following injuries: sprains or strains, burns, inhalation of chemicals, and various bone fractures. Workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory reported the most common injuries in this factory as being pierced by needles, being cut with a pair of scissors and getting their hands trapped in the machinery. They explained that these accidents were quite common because they were consistently working with needles and pairs of scissors. The participants further explained that they sometimes slipped and fell due to floors being slippery and tripped and fell over boxes which

were always on the floor. These boxes blocked exits and hallways and this posed a serious threat to the workers' lives during industrial fires or any other industrial emergencies.

Consider the following narratives

One of the most popular hazards in this department (stitching department) is being punched by the needle and cutting ourselves with scissors since we are always working with needles and scissors (Karabo).

Another participant mentioned that:

A lot of accidents happen in this factory; you see one of the workers was burnt by the chemicals they use in the dyeing section. Am not sure if she was compensated for the injury but she was rushed to the factory clinic (Mosa).

Furthermore, Kamohelo was of the opinion that:

In the cutting department they use complex and dangerous machines and the majority of workers there tend to cut-off their fingers and in extreme cases their hands. Extremely injured workers are taken to the government hospital mainly because the factory clinic does not have the adequate medical equipment (Kamohelo).

Participants further explained that when they suffered the aforementioned accidents they were quickly rushed to the factory clinic for treatment, but for more severe injuries they were taken to the local government hospital. The participants stated that the factory clinic was operated free of charge and it operated daily from 08:00 to 16:30, however, the clinic did not operate on weekends. The factory clinic was said to provide basic painkillers. The workers stated that the clinic services provided were limited to basic health problems and one of the participants explained that they went to the clinic for minor health problems but for more severe ailments they had to go to a public hospital.

We suffer from flu and arthritis and we are normally taken to the clinic for things like flu, small burns, cuts from scissors, sharp pains on the back and we are given paracetamol and they bandage us if necessary. Like I said we

also suffer from arthritis because of the coldness in this place and as far as I know we are not even taken to a good hospital we are taken to government hospitals because the factory clinic does not provide such services (Mphonyane).

All the time when we go to the factory clinic they give us paracetamol, so really it doesn't help much because at the end of the day paracetamol will only help me if I have a headache but not help me with arthritis, so when we go to the clinic with such major injuries or illness we do not get assistance we are told to go to the government hospital (Kefuoe).

The researcher also interviewed Lerato from the Department of Health and Environment as the assumption was that she had knowledge regarding Health and Safety in the textile industry. This assumption was based on the fact that the Department of Health and Environment was responsible for the clinics in this industry. Lerato explained that the clinic only provided services once the worker was injured, though she stated that the diagnosis was not officially related to the occupation of the worker.

If you get an injury, of course, you will know it's an occupational injury because it is the place of work, but their diagnosis has no relevance to the occupation. So, it's just a matter of giving them service once an injury has occurred (Lerato).

She further explained that it was important to associate the injury with the occupation so that the Ministry of Health could have the data of all the occupational injuries that workers experienced. This concurred with Calvin and Joseph (2006) who stated that the majority of employers in the textile industry did not link the work being performed with the injuries that occurred. They argued that employers acted in this manner mainly because they wanted to avoid the media's attention or inspection from the police. Lerato further explained that there was a new initiative from the Department of Health and Environment and that as part of this program she had requested that doctors associate injuries with the injured person's occupation.

There is a clinic at Lesotho Precious but am not sure if there are any charges behind the scene that are being incurred by the factory, but as for now the department have a contract with the doctors to attend all the alignments but not necessarily occupational diseases... It's not saying occupational diseases. Of course, now that it is something established it means we have to include that during diagnosis. They should consider relevance [of the injury] to the occupation, but it wasn't initially meant for that (Lerato).

Right now, [I] am writing a report and am going to request that their diagnosis should be associated with one's occupation. If its a headache of course its headache, but they should link it to the worker's history in relation to their job... If let's say for example she says she is a typist we can't really associate her headache with her occupation as much, but the probability is this headache is not from her work. But if she says most of my work is ironing and she says she has a sharp pain in the back, then we can say that comes from the ergonomic impact of standing all day and the bending and also what type of irons are they using and the height should be taken into consideration. All those things should be compared with their work so that we can have the data, as for now we don't have the data (Lerato).

Figure 4.2: The factory clinic



Legally when factory workers are injured, be it minor or major injuries, they are entitled to compensation. The compensation of occupational injuries is very important, and it will be discussed in the next section.

4.2.2. Compensation for occupational injuries

It is the workers' right to be compensated for occupational injuries, as the compensation money will assist in paying for medical bills and funding the lives and livelihoods of the victims. Lerato from the Department of Health and Environment stated that workers were well within their rights to get compensation if they were injured in any way, although she explained that the majority of workers did not report when they were injured due to fear of losing their jobs. She stated that poverty was the main reason these women endured such suffering.

Workers do get compensated when injured and it's just not workers in the textile factories... Even those who work for contractors are compensated. They just need to go to [the] labour offices and report it, but they do not go. They just don't report it due to fear of losing their jobs. So, what they should do is go to labour and fill the forms and go to doctor Lintle at Queen 2 hospital to have a look at the impact and then get compensated in regards to the impact (Lerato).

Poverty is our weakness and the fact that there is no one that seems to really care about us... So if one gets injured at work and you are told to go bandage yourself. True they will give you time off to go handle the injury but this one of compensation they try and hide it, fearing that they might lose their job. So, they hide it if it's a minor injury that you can live with, but if it's something serious you cannot hide after all you cannot work so you cannot hide it, so you will have to be compensated. But the cutting off [of] a finger - it's not taken as seriously as cutting off a hand (Lerato).

While interviewing the participants the researcher inquired about the compensation workers received when injured and most of the workers interviewed said that they did not have any knowledge of the compensation. They further explained that one of them was injured but she was never compensated. Paul from the Ministry of Labour and Employment and Lerato from the Ministry of Health and Environment, however, did not share the same sentiments as the participants as they argued that the workers were constantly reminded of their rights regarding compensation. Paul asserted that both the employers and employees had knowledge about the process of compensation, but employers hid evidence to avoid paying insurance.

The report from the Clean Clothes Campaign (2012) noted that employers often evaded the process of compensation, and in cases where workers were severely injured they were forced to return to their villages as they could no longer work in the factory, and with no income they were unable to afford the city life. From the narratives above it could be concluded that female workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory suffered both minor and major accidents in the workplace. Although they were compensated to some degree for being injured it was clear that the majority of them did not understand their rights and the compensation process as a whole. It is imperative that they are educated about the compensation process.

4.2.3. Summary

This section of the analysis discussed the working conditions at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory and from the narratives it was established that workers in this factory were subjected to exploitation regarding wages, working hours and rest periods. Participants stated that due to the toxic environment and unsafe working practices in this factory they experienced various occupational injuries and illnesses that had negatively affected their

health and their lives in general. Lastly the section investigated the compensation for occupational injuries and it was put forward by one of the participants that it was the right of the workers to be compensated when injured. Unfortunately, however, the majority of the informants seemed to lack knowledge about the compensation process.

4.3. Compliance and safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory

According to Mohibullah, et al. (2018, p.2) compliance is “the ability to act according to an order, a set of rules or request”. Compliance with any significant labour law or policy in the workplace is of primary importance as this practice assists in eliminating workplace accidents. Mat Zin and Ismail (2011) argue that compliance with safety requirements by both the employers and employees will promote efficiency and safety in the workplace, while failing to comply with the national labour standards in the workplace will result in more injuries, accidents and loss of production. Section two of the analysis explores the non-compliance practices by workers and employees at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. It further discusses the compliance and safety measures that are taken by the government and the factory management to ensure safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory.

4.3.1. Non-compliance at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory

Health and Safety in the workplace require a mutual concession from both the employee and employers to work together to maintain a safe, clean environment that does not pose any risk to the health of the employees. Compliance to Health and Safety standards in the textile industry remains an area of concern as workers and employees are still not complying with the labour standards. Parker (2000) argues that the primary reason for the non-compliance behaviour in export-oriented industries is the lack of monitoring. Parker (2000) further argues that a rule that is listed on paper but not monitored for compliance is not likely to elicit compliance. Compliance in the textile industry of Lesotho, as argued by the implementers of the Health and Safety standards, is not easily achieved due to the absence of a policy or a law.⁶ The implementers, being Lerato who is a compliance officer from the Department of Health and Environment and Paul from the Ministry of Labour and Employment, stated that there is no law or a policy binding factory owners to comply with health and safety standards in the workplace.

⁶ Implementers are the officials who put the law or the policy into practice.

Compliance is not easy, especially when we do not have the law. So, our challenge is that we do not have an Occupational Health and Safety Regulation Act as yet. Our main problem within Environmental Health is that our Public Health Order is old, it is the 1970 Act. So, there is nothing that stipulates or comprises Occupational Health within this Act. So it is just a general thing that one must work in a healthy environment. There is no law binding factory owners to act accordingly (Lerato).

Paul stated that due to the absence of a law or policy, factory owners in the textile factories of Lesotho persist in exploiting workers and violating the Health and Safety standards. According to Mat Zin and Ismail (2011), the collaborative effort of complying is not easily attainable in the textile industry because factory owners do not follow the rules and regulations of Health and Safety. They further explain that ignorant behaviour and attitudes from the employers and employees are the reasons behind the non-compliance behaviour. Similar to the study by Chowdhury (2017) which investigated the major challenges of effective implementation of the core labour standards within the labour jurisprudence of Bangladesh, the Lesotho Precious Garments factory workers and employers fail to comply with the Health and Safety standards in the workplace. Workers in the textile industry are exposed to numerous occupational hazards that demand protective clothing. Wearing of protective clothing by workers in the textile industry is of primary importance as it protects them from the harsh working environment that may result in injuries or death (Khalil, 2015).

While conversing with the participants the researcher noticed that the majority of workers were not wearing their personal protective clothing and proceeded to ask them if they were provided with protective clothing. The workers acknowledged that they were provided with protective clothing although they seldom used it. The workers were of the argument that they had been working in this factory for years and they knew what they were doing; they were certain that nothing would happen to them. Some participants shared that the protective clothing was uncomfortable and made them feel unattractive.

You know, I wish our bosses asked us what kind of masks and other protective gear we need instead of giving us useless things to wear. We know there are a lot of us here so they don't buy quality gear for us but they should have decent

designs, especially for us women. But what can we say, we need this job so we will continue not wearing these cheap and useless things and keep praying that we do not get sick (Mphonyane).

Ahmad, Nawaz, and Sattar (2016) argue that female workers have a bad attitude with regards to protective clothing; most female workers argue that the protective gear makes them look unattractive hence they hardly put it on. In addition, it is an issue of discomfort as Ahmad, et al. (2016) assert that the majority of female workers do not utilise this clothing due to the discomfort they feel during operations, particularly in a hot environment. Ceresna-Chaturvedi and Kumar (2015) report that workers claim that the wearing of personal protective clothing prevents them from meeting their production targets.

Yes, we are provided with protective clothing, but we hardly ever use them, because the heat in this factory is just too much for us to put on extra clothing and they are uncomfortable. So, we do not put on nose masks and other protective gear because it gets too hot, so we try not to wear too much clothes (Mpho).

Lisemelo my child, I have been working in this factory since 2001 and nothing tragic has ever happened to me when I did not put on my personal protective gear. Those clothes are uncomfortable, and they make us look ugly, so we rarely put them on (Mosa).

Some of the respondents even went to the extent of saying that the protective clothing was of no use to them.

Yes, we are provided with protective clothing, but they are of no use to us because we barely use them. Mainly because they are of poor quality and we suffocate when we put them on and other than that they do not protect us at all. We still inhale the dust and cotton particles, so they are of no use (Lehakoe).

Lerato shared that the majority of the workers felt suffocated because of the nose masks they were given, because the concept of wearing them was new to them and some found it difficult to wear them the whole day. Lerato's assertion was confirmed by the participants as

they all shared that they felt the masks were uncomfortable and that it was better to work without them. Mosa shared that as workers they were more productive without the masks as they did not have to continuously fidget with them. The following excerpt from Paul was considered:

Sometimes we need to understand that the protective clothing that they are being provided with is sub-standard. They are hand sewn and this leads to suffocation as they cannot breathe, therefore these masks do not protect these workers. They just mean nothing; whether they are using [them] or not it makes no difference. So, they need to be given appropriate standard protective clothing because things like masks need to cover the nose fully, not half. These are some of the things that need to be addressed... but we have a long way [to go] (Paul).

From the above narratives, it could be concluded that the high rate of non-compliance by factory owners and workers was due to the absence of a law or policy that obligated them to comply with the Health and Safety standards. It was also found that it was important that women's opinions were considered when designing the protective clothing as their comfort needed to be taken into consideration.

4.4. Measures taken by the government to ensure compliance and safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory

Participant Paul argued that the high rate of injuries and accidents occurring at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory was due to the non-compliant behaviour of both the workers and factory owners. The officials from the Ministry of Labour and Employment had implemented safety measures such as random inspections and radio programs to try and ensure compliance and safety in the textile industry.⁷ “Inspections in textile industries of Lesotho are randomly carried out by the officials of the Ministry of Labour and employment. The inspection process is executed in these factories for various reasons but mainly to monitor compliance of occupational health and safety standards, the working conditions in factories, wages and employment contracts” (Paul from transcribed interviews). Paul from the Ministry of Labour and Employment stated: “We do random inspections all over the country but at a given time.

⁷ This is a segment of content intended for radio broadcast. It is aimed at raising awareness about the importance of Health and Safety in the textile industry of Lesotho.

It just depends on our focus”. Paul further explained that due to the absence of a national policy concerning Occupational Health and Safety in Lesotho, Health and Safety in the textile industry had always been an area of concern. However, he elucidated that the inspections that were randomly carried out in these factories had improved the working conditions.

These inspections do improve the working conditions in these factories because wherever we [are] able to reach there is an improvement. I know there are people that are dedicated for factory inspections. Not in this field of Occupational Health and Safety but from Labour. There are inspectors from Industrial Relations, so they do go there... and Precious Garments factory is one of the biggest firms in the country, so we frequently go. That is how we monitor compliance in the textile industry of Lesotho (Paul).

Since there was no policy concerning the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the textile industry of Lesotho the researcher asked Paul about the method they used to assess compliance with OHS on the part of the factory owners. He explained the existence of the Labour Law Code of 1992 and that factory owners were expected to follow the basic principles within the Labour Law Code and put Health and Safety measures into practice in the workplace. Paul further explained that they imposed sanctions on factory owners who did not follow the basic principles within the Labour Law Code of 1992.

Participants were probed on the subject of inspection and the majority of them confirmed that officials from the Ministry of Labour and Employment randomly visited the factory and conducted inspections. The participants, however, also shared that it had been a long time since the factory had been inspected. Mosa shared that it had been two years since she last saw the inspectors at the factory. Kamohelo also shared that since her employment in 2014 she had only seen inspectors twice, although she could not recall the dates when the inspections were done. This issue was raised during a repeat interview with Paul and he confirmed that his Ministry did not conduct inspections as often as it should have. Paul in his defence stated that the reason they took such a long time to visit these factories was due to a shortage of staff.

It is difficult to reach all the factories in time due to shortage of staff. There are about eight inspectors in this country and it is just too much work considering the number of factories and mines we have in this country, so it takes us time to reach all the factories. However, each and every person is responsible for their own factory and it doesn't mean when we are not around things should just fall apart... They all know what is required from them and even if the last time we inspected the factories was in 2008 they still know what is required from them (Paul).

Wolman (1981) reports that staff inadequacy is the main reason why policies fail, particularly in the formulation or the implementation stages. Paul also shared that for safety measures to be fully realised, more staff members needed to be trained on the importance of implementing the standard labour laws in the textile industry of Lesotho. Despite the infrequency of the inspections some of the respondents shared that there were minor improvements that were made following the last inspection at their factory. To illustrate this point Lerato shared that the lighting in the sewing department had been improved and that they now had adequate lighting to work by. Some respondents on the other hand revealed that the 'changes' only lasted for a short time and that after that everything went back to normal.

These inspections do bring about minor improvements in this factory. The last time the inspectors were here management fixed the lighting in the stitching department and they tried to listen to some of our grievances and responded to them (Lerato).

Atseaba ngoanaka ke lakatsa eka batho bana ba labour ba ka chakela femeng mona mehlaena, hoba mohlang ba tlileng ke mohlang re sebetsang hamonate hona hoo. Ha ba tlile baokameli ba etsa tsohle tse nepahetseng empa rea tseba hore ke ntho ea nakoana feela hoba ha ba geta ho tsamaea tsohle li khutlela malulong a tsona. Ha re qala re bona ba re buisa hantle ebile ba lokisa rea tseba re tlo ba le baeti (Lehakoe).

You know my child I wish people from Labour can visit this factory every day because when they are here the management does everything by the book, but once they leave everything goes back to normal. So, when we

see the management being nice to us and fixing things we know that they are expecting visitors (Lehakoe).

Aoo! ha ke khahloe hle ngoaneso ke li inspection tseno hoba batho ba labour ha ba tlile mona oa bona eka ho tla fetoha empa ha ba tsamaea tsohle li boela malulong. Ha batho ba labour ba le teng mona o tla bona baokameli mohlang tsatsing leno ba lokisa tsohle, ba re buisa hantle, ba sa re roake kapa hona ho re otlala, empa che rea tseba ke ntho ea nako eno feela. Le taba ena ea hore batho ba labour ba nka nako e telele basa tle ho tlo re hloela ke eona e ntse etse ebe maemo a ntsa mpefala tjena (Ithabeleng).

I am never impressed by these inspections because once those people leave we are back to normal. You know when people from Labour are here, the management is so nice; no insults, no slapping... Everything is being fixed and once they leave aooo! We are back to where we started. The fact that they take a long time to conduct these inspections worsens the circumstances in this factory (Ithabeleng).

Improvements that resulted from the random inspections were mentioned by some of the participants while others shared that the inspections had not produced any changes in regard to their working conditions. Paul stated that the management from the Lesotho Precious Garments factory were not willing to follow Health and Safety principles and as a result the working conditions would not improve.

I can say a lot about the Precious Garment factory because I have been there, even though it was back in the day, and I know the kind of guidance they do get. But they are not willing to do what is right. However, we do go there and give recommendations and we do try and neutralise the conditions. We have recommended that they should have a safety officer, which is the person who will take responsibility for all the duties that we could not perform, [and] still, they don't have the safety officer! (Paul).

Paul stated that they also used radio programs to reach all workers working in the textile industry. He stated that the primary aim of this program was to raise awareness and to enhance workers' knowledge of Occupational Health and Safety in the textile industry.

We use radio programs as one of our strategies to reach people because with just inspections it is difficult to reach everyone. Actually, I am working on a report at the moment where it shows how many radio programs we offered and in 2017 we made about two radio programs. We went to the following radio stations: Harvest FM and Ts'enolo FM, discussing education on Occupational Health and Safety. Sometimes we discuss our mandate (who we are and what do we do) as Labour and we train our contractors on safety issues and those are the few examples (Paul).

The researcher asked the participants about the radio programs that were conducted by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the majority of the respondents stated that they were not aware of these programs. They explained that they spent most of their time in the factory working and were not allowed to listen to the radio while working, so they had no knowledge about the program. Some participants even went further to say: *“if the program was meant for us, then it wouldn't be aired on the radio during weekdays because they know we are busy during the weekdays”*. The main objective of the program, as mentioned by Paul, was to enhance the knowledge of factory workers and raise awareness about Health and Safety in the workplace. However the main objective was not accomplished, mainly because the targeted population of factory workers were not included and consulted during the decision making process.

If a consultation process had taken place, then the implementers would have known that workers did not have access to radios during the weekdays and the show would instead have been aired on weekends. The entire process was thus a top-down, authoritative decision from the Ministry of Labour and Employment as to what should have been done to raise awareness of Health and Safety in the textile industry in Lesotho. In the process workers were deprived of the opportunity to recommend better ideas that would suit their working schedules. As per Wolman (1981), when a program fails to achieve the desired outcome or have a positive impact on the target population in the society then the implementation of such a program is failing.

4.5. Measures taken by factory owners to ensure the safety of workers

Women working in the textile industry spend a significant portion of their days in the workplace, and for that reason it is of primary importance that they work in a safe, clean and healthy environment. To ensure workers' health and safety while at work the employer should be able to identify hazards within the workplace and establish preventative measures to protect the workers and provide the necessary training for them to do their jobs correctly. To ensure safety for workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory the employers had to undertake safety measures such as ensuring that there were adequate safety features, tools and equipment such as emergency fire exits, fire-fighting apparatus, personal protective clothing, training on the use of first aid kits and a seminar on fire and safety. The Lesotho Better Work (2013) report notes that in 2013, a seminar on fire and safety was held for three factories, the Lesotho Precious Garments factory being one of them. The aim of the seminar was to discuss and train employees on the causes and prevention of fires in textile factories, to enlighten the workers on the role of fire marshals, and fire risk reduction. Selected employees from the Lesotho Precious Garments factory attended this seminar and Kefuoe and Keamohetsoe were among the few that were selected to attend the training on how to use first aid kits and the seminar on fire and safety. They shared their experiences by saying:

Nna ke emong oa ba ileng ba fumana koetliso ena ea fire and safety, mme re ithutile tse molemo haholo. Re rutiloe ka hore na sesosa sa kotsi ea mollo lifemeng ke se feng le hore na kotsi ena e ka thibelo ke mekhoea efeng, le hore na setima mollo na se sebelisoa joang nakong eo ho kabang le kotsi ea mollo femeng ena. Ba ile ba boela ba re ruta ka polokeho, mme re ile ra joetsoa hore nakong ea kotsi ea mollo re phakise re tsoe ka menyako e sebelisoang maemong a tšohanyetso ebe re ema kantle ho feme (Kefuoe).

Personally, I have attended the training on fire and safety and we were educated on important issues on the subject of fire and safety. We were further informed about the causes and prevention of fire in the textile industries, also on how to use a fire extinguisher in the occurrence of

industrial fire. Furthermore, we were told that in the occurrence of fire we should use emergency exits and rush to the assembly point (Kefuoe).

There are selected workers in this factory that are trained on how to use first aid kits, and fortunately, I was among the selected workers that attended the training. Firstly, we were enlightened about the importance of a first-aid kit in textile factories. The trainers further told us that we should always put gloves on when assisting an injured worker, then as soon as possible we should try and stop the bleeding and bandage the wound and after that the injured worker should be taken to the factory clinic. There were instances when I had to use the knowledge I acquired through the training: there was a worker that cut herself with a pair of scissors and I had to help. We are also required to accurately report the details of the incident on the forms provided by factory management (Keamohetsoe).

Some of the participants shared that they were aware of the training, but they had never been chosen for the training. As a result, only a handful of factory workers were equipped with the skills needed. Lehakoe and Mpho shared that they had very limited knowledge on the use and importance of the firefighting apparatus and the first aid kits. They felt that they were unfortunate for never having been chosen to attend the training.

You know in this factory there are times when workers are called for training, but not all the workers can attend this training. I mean there are many workers in this factory, so we cannot all be afforded the opportunity to go for training, so only selected workers attended the training. The trained workers are the ones that assist us when we are injured or there has been an accident. Workers like me who have never attended these trainings have limited knowledge on the usage of first aid kits and on fire extinguishers. If there was a fire in this factory I wouldn't know what to do or how to use the fire extinguisher. It is very unfortunate that we cannot all attend the training (Lehakoe).

In this sewing section, there are few workers who have attended the trainings. Regrettably myself and the majority of the workers in this

section have not attended the training. In the occurrence of accidents workers with knowledge and skills assist us, however, we would also love to attend these training so that we can acquire the knowledge and the skills they have acquired through the training (Mpho).

The above narratives attest that seminars and training of employees are valuable strategies that can be used in textile factories to ensure safety, however, it is important that all workers are given an equal opportunity to attend the training or the seminars as they all need the skills and knowledge. Mpho shared that she felt it would be better if the employees who had been trained also shared their knowledge: *“You know even if those who are trained are given 30 minutes to share what they learned and to demonstrate how things like the fire equipment is used, we will all have an idea of what to do whenever there is an accident.”* Keamohetsoe also expressed her sentiments:

You know they keep choosing men to go and learn, not women. I don't think this is a good idea because there are so many women here so who will take care of the women when injured in delicate areas? I know I won't be comfortable with some guy touching me.

If the approach to training workers in this factory was a bottom-up approach, then the factory management would be aware that women workers felt safer and more secure if they were treated and thus touched by their fellow women. However, in this instance women were not consulted; rather the decisions were made for them. Sardenberg, (2016) argues that women's education and training in the workplace is equally important as that of their male counterparts. Sardenberg (2016) states that women should be given equal opportunities in development; dismantling the social and cultural barriers by providing equal access for women to education and training in the workplace. Most female workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory have not been given the opportunity to enhance their skills and knowledge by attending any of the training and seminars that take place in this factory. The participants stated that only selected females could attend but, in most cases the vast majority of workers that attended were male workers.

When the researcher entered the factory it was noticed that the factory was divided into four sections and there were direction signs which made it easier to identify the different sections

of the building. The researcher observed that there were several unlocked emergency exits, a pile of boxes that were packed in a hallway and blocking the nearest emergency exit, first aid kits, several fire extinguishers and lockers. Workers shared that there were several emergency exits in this factory and that they were always open during working hours. They further stated that every section in the building had several fire extinguishers and they were provided with personal lockers for the safety of their food and personal belongings.

There are two or more fire extinguishers in every department and the emergency exits are always open during working hours. We are also provided with a safe place that we store our personal belongings, such as food and our handbags (Mosa).

Workers in this factory were provided with lockers that they utilised to store their personal belongings, such as food, handbags, uniforms and their protective clothing. The researcher asked the key informant who was the supervisor in this factory to show them the lockers, and noticed that there were no locks on the lockers. According to Ithabeleng, the lack of locks was the reason they lost important items from their bags from time to time. Lehakoe and Kamohelo shared that their lockers were open, without doors, and this became a predicament during rainy or dusty weather as their food got contaminated by the dust. Mensah, et al. (2012) explain that dust and rainwater are a source of microbiological contamination that have an adverse health impact on humans. They expand on this by explaining that small or ultrafine dust particles when swallowed are more likely to penetrate deeply into the lungs. These ultrafine particles can also easily be absorbed directly into the bloodstream and may cause negative health impacts.

Having learned about the conditions of the lockers, the researcher was interested in how women felt about the lockers that they were using. The following were some of their responses:

Management has provided us with lockers to store our personal belongings, however, these lockers do not have locks or doors and this has resulted in a great deal of theft. Our personal belongings from our bags go missing from time to time and none of the workers have confessed to stealing the belongings (Ithabeleng).

The lockers that we are provided with do not have doors and this is a problem, especially during dusty or rainy days as our food gets contaminated by the dust. When it rains heavily our bags and food get rained on (Lehakoe).

The lockers are old and ever since I got here they have been in this condition. Some of these lockers are rusty and the rust contaminates our food and taints our personal clothing (Kamohelo).

Figure: 4.3: The lockers that factory workers use to store their personal belongings



The safety measures that are taken by the factory management are very important as they protect both the employer and employee from death or injury. Safety in this factory can be ensured only if the employer and employees comply with the health and safety standards or guidelines that are provided by the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

4.6. Summary

This section of the analysis has discussed the importance of compliance and safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. The section has argued that due to the lack of a policy or law the non-compliant behaviour of factory owners still persists. From the excerpts, it was established that workers' negative attitudes and ignorant behaviour were leading factors contributing to their non-compliant practices. The section further explored the compliance and safety measures that were implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the factory owners to ensure safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Random inspections and radio programs were some of the measures that were put in into practice by the officials from the Ministry of Labour and Employment to ensure compliance and safety. There is no doubt that the random inspections that were conducted in this factory have improved the working conditions of women, however, they should be done as frequently as possible. The radio programs that were meant to enhance the knowledge of workers and raise awareness about Health and Safety in the workplace were not considered to be useful as the majority of the workers were not even aware of these programs. The factory owners have provided workers with training and seminars to ensure Health and Safety in the workplace, however, it was confirmed by the majority of the respondents that they had limited knowledge of the education provided through the training as the majority of them had not been selected to attend the training.

4.7. Implementation challenges of the Occupational Health and Safety principle at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory

Implementation as defined by Paudel (2009, p.36) “is the carrying out, accomplishing, fulfilling, producing or completing of a given task”. Successful implementation of a policy or a principle requires adequate resources, participation of the concerned stakeholders and improvement in the political environment. Lack of the abovementioned factors will result in implementation failure. This last section of the analysis will discuss some of the critical factors that influence the success of the implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory.

4.7.1. Inadequate resources

Lack of funding, insufficient staff and budget-cuts were commonly cited factors that were believed to hinder the effective implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety

principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Signe` (2017) argues that adequate funding and resources are prerequisites for successful implementation of policies and principles. Lack of available funding and resources may result in failure to meet the objectives of the principle. The implementers of the Occupational Health and Safety principles stated that the implementation of the principles would be more effective if there were adequate resources. Signe` (2017, p.20) further argues that “*resources need to be made available for implementation to succeed and they also need to be available in the right combination*”. Paul stated that their main predicament as the Ministry of Labour and Employment was lack of resources and available funding. He explained that “*due to a lack of resources and available funding the health and safety principle is not well executed and to be honest we are also less eager to work because there are no tools*. Paul further explained that the little budget that the Ministry received to implement these principles was often directed to other departments which were running out of financial resources.

The problem is the lack of funding and the fact that the funds are not allocated sufficiently. For instance, you may find that safety is allocated money but it may happen that the funding is directed to other departments that may be running out of financial resources. Operationally we lack tools that can help us to improve the working conditions. And believe me when I tell you that we are only hosting workshops on Occupational Health and Safety now because we just got the funding from the World Bank (Paul).

So safety is being compromised in most cases. When we look at the budget not much funds are allocated to safety, which is something we need to work on and maybe get an explanation for why there are less resources allocated to safety. The problem is safety is not taken as a serious factor by the government, it's just one of those things to them and they don't understand that serious accidents happen in the textile industries and people do get hurt. We have serious cases where workers' hands are amputated, electric shock etc. (Paul).

Paul argued that this was a clear indication that Health and Safety in the workplace had never been the government's priority and to date there was still no policy or law that protected both

employers and employees in the workplace. It was further revealed by Paul that the department was always under budget and as a result, it was difficult for them to employ more staff as they did not have funds to pay them. He explained that the department was critically understaffed as there were only eight inspectors in the country. Matsieli (2014, p.67) argues that “*it is axiomatic that an insufficient number of staff to carry a heavy workload or pursue different attention-seeking tasks leads to program failure*”.

We cannot even hire more staff because we do not have the funds to pay them, hence there are only eight inspectors in the country. Due to heavy workload, it takes time for us to do the random inspections in the factories and mines and by the time we get there a lot of damage has been done (Paul).

Re sitoa le ho ka hira basebetsi ba bang hobane ha hona chelete eka ba patalang, ke mokhona re nang le bahlahlobi ba robeli feela ka hara ho naha. Ka lebaka la ho imeloa ke mosebetsi ho re nka nako hore re tsamaee re lo hlahloba ka lifemeng le ka merafong, mme nakong eo re fihlang re fumana ho senyehile boholo.

Khan (2016) argues that a policy or program intervention may be compromised or poorly implemented due to lack of personnel and adequate financial resources. Khan (2016) further argues that the absence of the abovementioned key factors may result in an increased demand for services and difficulties in goal achievement. From the above narratives, it could be established that resource adequacy and available funding were the key contributing factors that hindered successful implementation of the Health and Safety principles in the textile industry of Lesotho. It is imperative that the aforementioned factors are taken into serious consideration by the government of Lesotho.

4.7.2. Political uncertainty

The implementation of a policy or a principle can only prosper in a politically stable country. The implementation of the Health and Safety principles in the textile industry of Lesotho has been jeopardised by the political uncertainty in Lesotho. Howlett, Ramesh and Wu (2015) argue that political uncertainty and governance play important roles in causing and

perpetuating constant failure of policy implementation. Lerato, one of the implementers from the Department of Health and Environment explained that the political uncertainty in Lesotho was the main reason they failed to successfully execute the Occupational Health and Safety principles in the textile industry of Lesotho. She explained: *“our main problem as implementers is the political instability in this country. You see with the coalition parties that have been formed lately and the constant change of regime in the last past five years [that the] implementation of programs and interventions have been greatly affected”*. Makinde (2005) argues that with the change of government there comes a change in policy because when the new government comes into power they tend to neglect the previous policies that were formulated by the opposition government, leading to the majority of policies or programs failing in the implementation stage. Lerato further explained that most of the factory owners were reluctant to adhere to the Health and Safety standards in the workplace, as they argued that they were not prepared to spend that much on protective clothing and other Health and Safety equipment, only to lose the factory or the tender in the next elections.

There is also a political issue that when this party wins I might lose this tender or this factory so what happens to me after I have spent so much on buying all this protective gear, only to lose the factory in two weeks if we happen to have a new party. Unfortunately for Lesotho, it all boils down to politics; which party is ruling. It is all about what will help them during elections and the factory owners also get affected (Lerato).

Lerato further explained that the government generally used the harsh working condition of women in these factories to lobby workers to vote for them during elections. They promised them that they would improve their working conditions in these factories if they voted for them and never delivered on their promises. Howlett, et al. (2015, p.214) reported the same, stating that *“...designations of policy success and failure are semantic or discursive tools themselves used in public debate and policy-making processes to seek political, partisan, and often electoral advantage”*. One of the female workers further reinforced this finding by sharing that during elections they were promised better wages and working condition by the government, however, the ruling government had yet to deliver on these election promises.

4.7.3. Stakeholder participation

According to Stiglitz (2002, p.165), participation “*is a process that entails open dialog and broadly active civic engagement and it requires that individuals have a voice in the decisions that affect them*”. King, Feltey and Susel (1998) argue that stakeholder participation is crucial in policy making because it guarantees that the citizens are able to take and influence decisions that affect them. It is through public participation that the objectives of the policy or the program are accomplished. It was established during interviews that the participation of factory workers in decision making was minimal. The majority of the participants affirmed that they played a minimal role when it came to matters pertaining to their working conditions. One of the participants put forward that if they were given a chance to participate in decision making, maybe their working conditions would improve.

If only we were given a chance to discuss with the government the working challenges that we come across in this factory then we would be able to discuss with them possible solutions that might help to improve our working condition (Mpho).

Stiglitz (2002) argues that participation of concerned stakeholders gives rise to relevant information that the governments are otherwise not likely to have. Participation of female workers in decision making will assist in generating new ideas and ways that will help in maintaining Health and Safety in the workplace. Conversely, not involving them in decision making may sabotage the ideas and ways of preserving Health and Safety in the workplace. It was previously mentioned that the radio program that was executed by the Ministry of Labour and Employment to raise awareness of Health and Safety in the textile industry was not a success due to the fact that workers were not able to listen to their radios on weekdays. It was argued that if workers were consulted or involved in decision making then the government would have been aware that it was impossible for the workers to listen to their radios on weekdays, and the campaign would have worked better if the program had been aired on a Saturday or Sunday. Khan (2016) is also of the opinion that it is imperative that concerned stakeholders are provided with the opportunity to influence decision making and for them to know that their decisions have a potential to make a difference.

One of the participants, Thato, shared that trade union representatives participated on their behalf during decision making processes. Thato explained that they conveyed all their grievances to the union representatives and the representatives then tried to address the problems with the government. Despite this, however, not much had changed since 2001 when she started working in this factory so the process did not appear effective.

Whenever we have problems we talk to our union representatives about it and they always promise us that they will work to the best of their abilities to solve our grievances. We told them about the issue of verbal and physical abuse, however, the issue still persists even today. So we do not know what was said during decision making but whatever was said did not solve our problem (Thato).

We complained about our low monthly income for years and the government finally agreed to meet and discuss the issue with our trade union representatives, nonetheless, nothing has changed so far. We still work long hours and [are] paid [little]. I think it would be better if we are given the chance to participate in decision making, particularly in matters that concern our lives (Mpho).

According to King, et al. (1998), governments do not aggressively seek public involvement in decision making, however, if they do decide to involve the public they do not necessarily use the public's input when making decisions. King, et al. (1998) explain the reason for this, stating that: "*administrators believe that greater citizen participation increases inefficiency because participation delays and increases red tape*". Although it was established that trade union representatives were given the opportunity to participate in decision making on behalf of factory workers, it is argued by the researcher that trade union representatives play a minimal role in influencing decisions regarding the working conditions in this factory.

4.8. Summary

This section of the analysis discussed how inadequate resources, political instability and lack of participation by concerned stakeholders have negatively affected the implementation of the occupational Health and Safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. This

section argued that workers and trade union representatives' participation in decision making was very limited. From the excerpts, it was established that the Ministry of Labour and Employment lacked the capacity to accurately execute the Health and Safety principles.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The primary goal of this research was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety principles in relation to female workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. The main conclusion that emerged from the analysis of the data presented in the previous chapter was that there was no national policy regarding Occupational Health and Safety in the factories comprising the textile industry of Lesotho. However, it was found that the government of Lesotho utilised the Health and Safety principles within the Labour Law Code of 1992 to enforce compliance to the Labour Law standards in the textile industry in the country. The factory owners in Lesotho were required to follow the stated principles of Occupational Health and Safety within the Labour Law Code of 1992 to ensure clean and safe working environments that posed no risk to the health of the factory workers.

It is worth noting that the health and safety principles within the Labour Law Code of 1992 are not binding laws, but rather just guiding principles that factory owners may or may not decide to adhere to. The absence of a policy or a law that regulates the activities of factory owners in complying with the international labour standards has resulted in dire working conditions in the textile industry of Lesotho. In this concluding chapter general conclusions are drawn and specific recommendations for the study are put forward.

5.2. Summary of the study

One of the key objectives in this research was to explore the perceptions and the experiences of female workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Although the factory management declared that they abided by the stated principles of Occupational Health and Safety it was established that the factory owners continued to violate the stated labour laws within the Labour Law Code of 1992. The study findings revealed that female workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory were faced with numerous working challenges. The women stated that they constantly worked under intense pressure due to the high production targets of 150 pieces of clothes per hour and worked long irregular working hours. Female workers were expected to reach their hourly production targets and failure to do so resulted in them being threatened with the loss of their jobs and/or physical and verbal punishment by

the factory owners. The finding validates those of Hancock et al (2016) that women in textile industries are confronted with issues of physical and verbal abuse. It was also observed that women in the stitching, ironing and cutting sections of the factory carried out all their duties while standing, while those in the sewing section were allowed to sit and work. The practice of standing or sitting the whole day negatively affected the health of these workers as they suffered musculoskeletal disorders such as back pain, neck pain and leg cramps. The findings further confirm those of Calvin and Joseph (2006) that workers in textile industries are exposed to various minor and major occupational hazards.

The study further established that the women's health and physical performance was also negatively affected by the physical and ergonomic hazards found in this factory. The study revealed that the ventilation system in this factory was very poor and there were no heaters or suitable air conditioners on the factory floor hence it became extremely cold in winter and extremely hot in summer. In extreme or snowy winters, the most affected group of workers were those that worked in the washing section, as they worked in an open space throughout the year. Workers explained that it became difficult to work in winter because of the numbness of their hands and their lower bodies. The workers suffered from arthritis due to the severe cold they were exposed to, and many workers had lost their jobs because of their deteriorating health. The excessive heat in summer, on the other hand, caused lack of concentration and sleepiness among the workers. Furthermore, a significant relationship was established between the industrial noise pollution and hearing loss among these workers. The findings of the study further revealed that the poor ergonomic design of the working tables negatively affected the health and the physical performance of the workers. It was disclosed by the participants that the working tables were too high and it was thus difficult and exhausting for them to work on these tables.

Another finding of this study was that the female workers in this factory suffered both minor and major injuries such as burns, strains, hands being trapped in the machines, tripping and falling, lung injuries from the inhalation of chemicals, cuts from the pairs of scissors used and needle prick injuries. It was established that in the event of minor accidents workers were taken to the factory clinic for treatment and for the more severe injuries they were taken to the local government hospital. When workers were injured they were supposed to report their occupational injuries to the Ministry of Health in order to receive compensation to help cover their medical bills and other expenses. It was found, however, that the workers did not report

these injuries; firstly because they feared losing their jobs and secondly because they lacked knowledge of this requirement. The vast majority of the workers sampled claimed not to have knowledge of the compensation process hence they had never reported their injuries.

The second objective that prompted the researcher to undertake this study was to examine the level of compliance and the safety measures taken by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the factory management to ensure Health and Safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. Compliance at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory was not easily attainable due to the lack of a policy or a law that obligated both the employer and employees to follow the existing Health and Safety standards. Workers at this factory were provided with personal protective clothing to protect themselves against the harsh working environment but the workers did not utilise it. They were of the argument that the protective clothing was uncomfortable and that as such it hindered their work performance. This non-compliant behaviour of the workers increased their exposure to the numerous occupational hazards in the factory.

To monitor compliance to the Health and Safety standards in the factories of the textile industry in Lesotho the Ministry of Labour and Employment attested that it conducted random inspections of the factories. The participant from this Ministry however admitted that these random inspections were very infrequent because of staff shortages and a lack of financial resources in the Ministry. It was revealed that there were only eight inspectors in the country to monitor the compliance in all of the factories and mines, not nearly enough to ensure significant compliance. Despite the fact that these inspections were not often performed it was confirmed that those conducted had improved the harsh working conditions in this factory to some extent. The Ministry of Labour and Employment had also hosted a radio program that was aimed at educating the factory workers about Health and Safety in the workplace, although the majority of the female workers interviewed had not even been aware that such a program existed since they were not consulted about such a program. This remark supports King, et al. (1998) argument that authentic participation of concerned stakeholders in decision-making is an essential element of implementation which enhances the achievement of desired outcomes.

To ensure Health and Safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory the factory management had instituted a number of preventative measures. The study found that some workers were offered training on how to use first aid kits and some had attended a seminar on

the cause and prevention of industrial fires. However, the seminar and the training were only attended by a selected few women, therefore only a minority of the female workers had acquired the necessary knowledge and the skills. Instead, preference was given to the male workers when it came to training and education in this factory. It is of primary importance to educate both male and female workers as they require the knowledge and skills equally as they all have a role to play in Health and Safety in the workplace.

It was further observed that there were numerous emergency exits in this factory and although they were unlocked, access to these exits was blocked by piles of boxes. Staff lockers for the storage of food and personal items were found to be wide open, which left the food open to contamination by industrial pollutants and the staff open to theft of their belongings. The study has determined that factors such as political instability, inadequate human and financial resources and a lack of participation by concerned stakeholders have also hindered the successful implementation of the Occupational Health and Safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory.

Based on the summary presented above, the following recommendations are offered:

5.3. Recommendations for the government

1. There is a need for a comprehensive national policy regarding Occupational Health and Safety in the textile industry in Lesotho.
2. The Labour Law Code of 1992 needs to be amended as it is too old and no longer addresses the relevant issues concerning women in the workplace.
3. The Ministry of Labour and Employment should be provided with adequate resources (financial and staff resources) to ensure the effective implementation of Occupational Health and Safety measures and to ensure regular inspections of the factories of the Lesotho textile industry.
4. Factory owners should be held accountable for the accidents that in occur in their factories when they are found to be negligent in terms of the Health and Safety of their staff.

5. The Ministry of Labour and Employment should address issues such as physical and verbal harassment from employers and the unrealistically high production targets in this factory.

5.3.1. Recommendations for factory owners

1. To prevent accidents all workers should be given an opportunity to attend training on how to exit during an emergency, how to use a fire extinguisher, how to use first aid kits and training and awareness regarding Health and Safety in their work place.
2. Installation of heaters and the design of adequate ventilation to effect air circulation in this factory. Proper maintenance must be carried out on both.
3. All workers should be provided with decent or satisfactory protective clothing.
4. Adequately equipped medical care with highly trained full-time nurses for all injured workers.
5. They should hire a full-time safety officer who will monitor compliance of both employers and employees and will ensure safety in this factory.
6. Maintain good house-keeping to prevent accidents and to ensure a safe and risk free environment for both workers and employers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix one: Sesotho Informed consent



UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL
For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT RESOURCE TEMPLATE

Lumela 'Me

Lebitso laka ke Lisemelo Chesetsi (215078476). Ke moithuti oa Univesithi ea KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. Ke ntse ke etsa lipatlisiso ka leano/policy e buang ka bophelo mosebetsing le polokeho. Sepheho sa patlisiso ena ke ho lekola hore na policy/leano lena la bophelo mosebetsing le polokeho le teng femeng ena, haebe le teng le fetotse maemo a lona a tsebetso joang. Ke na le thahasello ea ho botsa lipotso ka sehloho sena, me ke kopa o tlo arolellane le nna maikutlo le litsebo tsa hao ka sehloho sena. Nako ea lipotso e tlabametso e leshome le metso e meraro. Haokaba le lipotso kapa mathata a feng kapa a feng ke fumaneha mona: (Email: Lydia.chesetsi@yahoo.com . Mohala: 0789334954). Kapa

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

PrivateBagX54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Ke kopa o ele hloko hore ho nka karalo e tlabametso e leshome le metso e meraro. Rekoto le likarabo tse bang di ngotsoe pampiring li tla beuo sebakeng se bolokeileng. Kamora lilemo tse hlano li rekoto le lipampiri li tla chesoa. Tsena tsohle re tla li etsa ho latela melao ea sekolo. Haeba o lumela tsohle ke kopa o tekene foromo ena.

Tumello (tlatsa tse latelang)

Nna (Lebitso) ke haloselitsoe ka patlisiso ena ke (Lebitso la moithuti).

Ke fuoe monyetla oa ho araba lipotso tse latelang ka mokho khotsofang

Ke hlapanya hore ha kea qobelo ho nka karolo tabang tsena, mme kea ukwisisa hore kena le tokelo ea ho tlohela ho arabela lipotso nakong efeng kapo efeng

Ha kena le lipotso ke tla botsa ba latelang:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

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Kea lumela hore o ka rekota litaba tsena : eea/ che

Tekena mona

Date

Appendix two: Informed Consent in English



Informed Consent Letter

Dear Participant

My name is **Lisemelo Chesetsi (215078476)**. I am a Master's candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. The title of my research is: **The effectiveness of the occupational health and safety principles in relation to women workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory**. The aim of the study is to evaluate the implementation of occupational health and safety principles at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory. I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your knowledge and experiences on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalised for taking such an action.
- Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview will take about (30-40 mins).
- The records as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only by myself and my supervisors. After a period of five years, in line with the rules of the university, the records will be disposed of by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures).

I can be contacted at: School of Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. Email: Lydia.chesetsi@yahoo.com. Cell number: 0789334954

My supervisor is Dr Nokwanda Nzuza who is located at the School of Social Science, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus. Email: nzuzan@ukzn.ac.za .

Cell number: 0312601638

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (*full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Appendix three: Sesotho questions for factory workers

The effectiveness of the occupational health and safety principles in relation to women workers at the Precious Garments factory in Maseru- Lesotho.

Lipotso tsa basebetsi ba Lesotho Precious garments factory

1. Lilemo :

- 20-25 26-30 31 -35
- 36-40 41-45 46-50

2. Boemo ba lenyalo

- Ea so nyaloe ea nyetsoeng
- Ea fetetsoeng ke molekane ea hlaliloeng

3. Boemo ba thuto

- Primary
- Secondary
- High School
- University

4. Boemo ba hao ba tsebetso

- Temporary permanent

5. Kutlusiso ea hao keng ka bophelo bo botle le polokeho mosebetsing?

6. Ke mathata a feng a bophelo ao le kopanang le ona mosebetsing?

7. Ka tsebo ea hao kapa kutlusiso ea hao na o ka re mathata a lona a bophelo mosebetsing moo a nkeloa bohato ke baokameli ba lona?

8. Baokameli ba nkile mehato efeng ho netefatsa hore bophelo bo botle le polokeho mosebetsing ke ntho e teng?

9. Na o ka re mehato ee e thusitse ho ntlafatsa boemo ba tsebetsoe ea lona femeng ee?

10. Lona jwaloka basebetsi na le etsa karolo ea lona ho boloka bohloeki, bophelo bo botle le polokeho mosebetsng?
11. Lekala la tsa mosebetsi na bona ba etsa karolo ea ho bona hore bophelo bo botle, bohloeki le polokeho ke ntho e teng femeng ee?
12. Baokameli ba feme ena le ba lekala tsa mesebetsi na ba nkile khato ho bona hore le na le kutlusiso ka bophelo bo botle, polokeho mosebetsing le bohloeki na?
13. Na o ka re policy kapa leano lee la bophelo bo botle le polokeho mesebetsing le fetotse maemo a lona a tsebetso femeng ee?
14. Ka kutlusiso ea hao na o ka re hona le likheo tse hlokang ho katoa ka hara policy ee kapa leano lee la bohloeki, bophelo bo botle le polokeho mesebetsing?
15. Joaloka motho a seng a na le nako a sebetsa femeng ena o ka khothaletsa hore baokameli ba lokise kae hore policy ena kapa leano lena le tsebe ho sebetsa?

Ke leboha ka nako ea hao

Appendix four: Interview Questions for factory workers

1. Age:

- 20-25 26-30 31 -35
- 36-40 41-45 46-50

2. Marital status:

- Single Married Widow Divorced

3. Educational level

- Primary level
- Secondary level
- High School level
- Tertiary level

4. Employment status

- Temporary Permanent

5. What is your understanding about occupational health and safety in the workplace?

6. What are some of the occupational health issues faced by women at the Lesotho Precious garments factory?

7. Would you say that the occupational health challenges faced by women at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory are being effectively dealt with by the management or the Department of Labour and Employment?
8. What are some of the measures taken by the factory management to ensure the effective implementation of occupational health and safety at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory?
9. Have the implemented measures improved the working conditions of women at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory?
10. Are women workers at the Lesotho Precious Garments factory doing their part to ensure health and safety in the workplace?
11. Would you say the Department of Labour and Employment is doing enough to ensure the effective implementation of an occupational health and safety policy in the textile industry of Lesotho?
12. Have the factory owners and Department of Labour and Employment ensured that women are knowledgeable about occupational health and safety and safety in the work place?
13. Has the implementation of the occupational health and safety improved the working conditions of women in the Lesotho Precious Garments factory?
14. Do you think that there are any gaps in the implementation of the occupational health and safety policy in this factory?
15. What is it that you would recommend factory managers do in order to effectively implement the occupational health and safety policy in the work -place?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!!!

Appendix five: Interview guide for factory management

1. Have the occupational health and safety policies been implemented in this factory?
2. What measures have you taken as management to ensure the effective implementation of occupational health and safety policies in this industry?
3. Have these measures improved the working conditions of women in this factory?
4. As factory owners what are some of the challenges you come across when implementing the occupational health and safety policies?
5. Would you say the occupational health and safety policies address the health and safety of employees and employers in the textile industry of Lesotho?

Appendix six: Gate keeper's letter

LESOTHO PRECIOUS GARMENTS (PTY)LTD

P.O.BOX A246, MASERU 100 LESOTHO
SITE NO,12273-001-12 LIOLI ROAD, MASERU INDUSTRIAL ESTATE
MASERU LESOTHO
TEL:266-325842.325843 FAX:266-310915

23/01/2018

University of Kwazul Natal
Durban RSA

To whom it may concern

Dear Sir or Madam:

RE: Acceptance letter for interviewing employees(Lisemelo Chesetsi)

I allow the above mentioned student to conduct some interviews to our employees in 2018.

Thanks you in advance

Yours Faithfully


MOLETE MAKEOANE
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGER

Appendix seven: Ethical clearance letter



16 November 2018

Ms Lisemelo Lydia Chesetsi (215078476)
School of Social Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Ms Chesetsi,

Protocol reference number: HSS/0549/018M

New project title: The effectiveness of the Occupational Health and Safety Principle in relation to women workers at Lesotho Precious Garment Factory

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 12 November 2018 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in Title

Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for period of 3 years from the date of original issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr Nokwanda Yoliswa Nzuza
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Maheshvari Naidu
Cc School Administrator: Ms Nonhlanhla Radebe

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