

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND ITS IMPACTS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A  
CASE STUDY OF HWANGE COLLIERY COMPANY LIMITED, ZIMBABWE.

BY

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## Abstract

The study sought to assess impact of occupational stress on employee performance at Hwange Colliery Company Limited. The study aimed at Identifying sources of occupational stress, determining the impact of occupational stress on employee performance, as well as examining the strategies to curb occupational stress on employee performance. The research employed quantitative (Questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) research methods. The research established that job insecurity, safety issues, unhealthy work sites, delays in the payment of salaries and benefits as well as lack of recognition for outstanding work done were the main causes of stress. The research also established that workers who are married and divorced were mostly affected by home pressure and recorded high levels of work stress. The study concluded that occupational stress has negative impact to the organizational performance as it resulted in lost time injuries, absenteeism, accidents, low morale and poor work relations. The study recommends proactive interventions by implementing management strategies that aims on elimination of occupational stress so that the organization may fully achieve optimum organizational excellence. Institutional coping strategies were found to be fragmented, weak and almost non-existent. Proper environmental management at the work sites, outstanding performance recognition, down to top approach in decision making, provision of adequate PPE, stress management training and adoption of employee wellness and assistance programs were the main recommendations brought forward to improve the workers' welfare and reduce the levels of occupational stress at Hwange Colliery Company Limited.

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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother Dorcus Nkompilo who believed in me all the way and brought candles when my academic efforts seemed to be in dire darkness. Thank you mom for inspiring me with your incredible audacity to survive in this world full of calamities and backed me with unwavering emotional, spiritual and material support.

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| HCCL- Hwange Colliery Company Limited .....   | 10 |
| HR. Human Resource .....  | 10 |
| LITFR- Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate .....  | 10 |
| LITSR- Lost Time Injury Severity Rate .....   | 10 |
| NSSA- National Social Security Association .....  | 10 |
| PPE- Personal Protective Equipment .....  | 10 |
| SHEM- Safety Health and Environment Manager .....   | 10 |
| SHEQ- Safety, Health, Environment, and Quality .....  | 10 |
| SHEQ REP- Safety, Health, Environment, and Quality Representative .....   | 10 |
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## **Abbreviations**

EMS- Environmental Management System

HCCL- Hwange Colliery Company Limited

HR. Human Resource

LITFR- Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate

LITSR- Lost Time Injury Severity Rate

NSSA- National Social Security Association

PPE- Personal Protective Equipment

SHEM- Safety Health and Environment Manager

SHEQ- Safety, Health, Environment, and Quality

SHEQ REP- Safety, Health, Environment, and Quality Representative

SPSS- Statistical Package for Social Sciences

WHO- World Health Organization

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Background of study

Fiabane, et al (2012) argues that stress is the inadequate coping with work environment which lead to negative consequences on workers physical and psychological health, due to negative emotions. This study aims on curbing negativity caused by work related stress. This important as it helps the organisation to gain a competitive advantage over its rivals and practice good ethical behaviour. Leung, Chan and Chong (2010), good performance can be achieved through having a disciplined work culture this can attract talented employees (Malik, Saleen and Ahmad, 2010)

Occupational stress has been defined by Cox et al (2003) as the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressure that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. Stress is frequently considered as the most common disease of modern age. Lagerveld et al (2010) postulates that participation depression can include serious problems to enter the labour market, short-term disability such as episodes of absenteeism, long term or permanent work disability and employment termination. This leads to low productivity for the employer. Ferlie and Rosenberge (2011:171) states that major sources of stress are caused by inequality at work staff, no payment and shortage lack of recognition and job security. The more employees feel that their rights are being depressed they turn to be demotivated which will lead to low production and even tarnishing the brand name of the organisation. Mosadeghral (2013:169) states that imbalance between demands of the work place and ability to cope, long working hours and difficult working condition are the cause of stress. The organisation will suffer heavy loses of poor production, loss of customers and poor brand name

The organisation should introduce training programs for its employees as a way of managing occupational stress. Training of both physically, socially intellectually and mentally are very essential in facilitating not only the level of production but also the development of personal in the organisation and HCCL as an organisation has not been conducting such trainings due to economic hardships.

In terms of managing stress in organizations, there has been number of diverse strategies used. According to Mukhalipi (2014), a good employer should design and manage work in a way that avoids common risk factors for stress and prevents problems as much as possible. This will allow employees to be more productive at all times as they will feel appreciated and cared for. There are basically three ways of managing stress. Mukhalipi (2014) insinuates that the first way is primary prevention where stress is reduced through ergonomics, work and environmental design, organizational and management development.

Large scale socioeconomic and technological changes in recent years along with increasing trends in restructuring and downsizing has continued in many organizations, resulting in an increase in subcontracting and outsourcing that have affected workplaces considerably (Sparks, et al 2001) from 2015, HCCL has been going through a restructuring process which has led to immense downsizing and subsequently retrenchment. This has left many workers job insecure as the exercise is still going on (Chaeruka, 2014). According to Brickford (2005), stress in the workplace is a growing concern in the current state of the economy, where employees increasingly face conditions of overwork, job insecurity, low levels of job satisfaction and lack of autonomy.

Poor communication has also been trivial as Lee (2000) postulates that one of the greatest sources of employee stress is for employees not to be aware of changes taking place in the company. This has generated visible low morale among workers as they drown in anxiety, Nguwi (2014) postulates that 43% of Zimbabweans suffer from occupational stress which is a figure way higher than of the average of developed countries at 1525%. The thrust of this research is to explore the sources, impacts and coping strategies of occupational stress at HCCL.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Occupational stress, job performance and job satisfaction are reported to be interrelated, contributing to development of diseases and high accidents (Moustaka and Teodoros, 2010). Distress occurs when individual perceives a loss, challenge when levels exceeds for coping

abilities and resources available to an individual results in a detrimental to the organization and a worker(Shropshire and Kadle, 2012).

Poor customer satisfaction made Colliery customers to opt for other coal mining companies such as Makomo as they suffer from poor service being rendered leading to poor quality of coal and failure to meet customer demands. Due to poor performance, Hwange Colliery Company Limited has lost its competitive advantage over its competitors. There are stress indicators on workers such as non attendance, work accidents and decrease in morale which are manifesting within HCCL employees. These have been provoked by long working hours, unclear job descriptions, poor working conditions, delay in payment of salaries and generally poor operating environments. If no intervention strategies are adopted to manage and monitor the stress levels at HCCL, the situation will get worse with more and more workers succumbing to the effects of job stress. Mosadeghral (2013:169) states that imbalance between demands of the work place and ability to cope, long working hours and difficult working condition are the cause of stress. According to all that have been said one can be in support of Mosadeghral (2013) ,taking for instance the HCCL context, the company is failing to perform due to inadequate resources, machines are out dated and it will be difficult for the employee to meet the targets so as resulting to stress at work place.

According to Herald of 23 June 2015, Zimbabwe is in a deep economic and social crisis characterised by low industrial capacity operation, leading to the overall decline in gross domestic product (GDP) by 50% in 2008. In light of such overwhelmed economic context, the mining industries of Zimbabwe have not been out of danger, HCCL inclusive. The company has been going through economic collapse for close to a decade now. This has resulted in the company endlessly reorganizing, downsizing through retrenchment and massively embarking on cost cutting measures at the expense of safety and health of workers. Thus justifying the reason for partaking the research project

### **1.3 Research objectives**

#### General Objective

To analyse occupational stress and its impacts on employee performance at Hwange Colliery Company Limited, Zimbabwe.

#### Specific Objectives

- To identify the causes of stress among working employees.
- To assess the impact of occupational stress on job performance at HCCL
- To explore strategies that can be adopted in order to curb the negative impacts off stress on working employees.
- To examine coping strategies adopted by HCCL in dealing with occupational stress.

### **1.4 Justification of the study**

Occupational stress has been increasing in the recent years and there are studies of occupational stress and its sources, but few ventured into impacts of occupational stress on employee performance which shows that there is a clear gap existing in the availability of researched data to understand the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance in the mining sector of Zimbabwe.. The absence of such knowledge may seriously affect Mining Companies ability to develop appropriate strategies for stress management and promotion of employee performance. Hence that's the focus of this study is to examine the impacts of occupational stress on employee performance of Mimosa Mining Company. This information will be very critical since there is limited information concerning occupational stress at HCCL and other mining companies such as Zimplants, Makomo, Mimosa, Unki and Murowa Diamond mines as they might be also exposed to occupational stress and performance challenges. The research findings as well as the recommendations will assist in lessening occupational stress related costs to the company. The research will also help other stakeholders which are partners with HCCL.

It was during her work related learning period (January 2016- December 2016) at HCCL that the student recognized some of the symptoms of occupational stress among workers. As a prospective future SHEQ practitioner in various industries, the study will add value to her knowledge of comprehensive occupational health and safety management through the integration of psychosocial issues.

### **1.5 Study area**

Hwange Colliery Company Limited is listed on the Zimbabwe, Johannesburg and London stock exchanges. The History of the Organisation ages back to the 1890's when a German Prospector Albert Giese visited the Hwange area due to the discovery of the "stones that burn" (Coal) by the Nambian people. In 1897, the first five shafts were sunk after two years of prospecting and surveying. The Wankie Coal, Railway and Exploration Company was registered in 1898. After acquiring the claims in 1901 and sinking further fifteen shafts, and completing the main incline at No1 Colliery in 1902. During this period coal was transported by wagons to Bulawayo, the completion of the 340km railway in 1904 allowed the first train to get to Wankie and exportation of surplus coal to Kimberly in South Africa. High coal demand expanded the company establishing its first beehive coke ovens in 1911. However, the company was running at a loss and a new company Wankie Colliery Company was formed to take over. The company was successfully rebranded to Hwange Colliery Company Limited in 2005 owing to the change of the mining town.

HCCL is the country's major coal producer and also a significant player in the energy sector and is located at the western part of Zimbabwe in the Matabeleland North Province. The coal at Hwange occurs in the Karoo rocks of the Mid-Zambezi basin. HCCL has over the years embarked intensive Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) programs which have been of paramount importance to the whole mining industry. HCCL is an ISO certified (ISO 9001;

2008).coal mining giant located in the Western slant of Zimbabwe. the company has a modern and well equipped hospital which provides comprehensive medical care not only to workers and their dependents but also to the whole of Matebeleland north province.



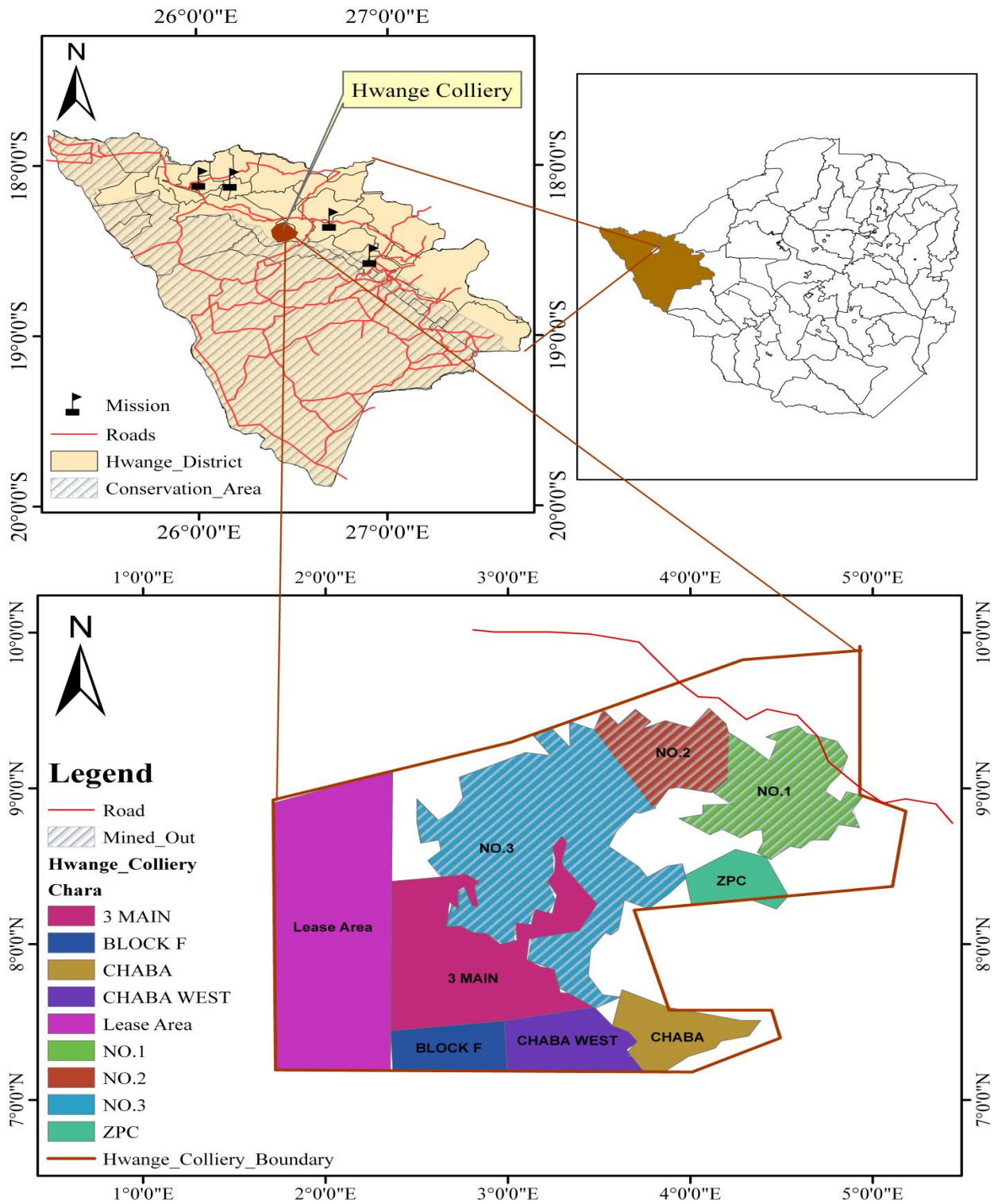


Figure1.0: Map showing Hwange Colliery Company Limited concession area.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITRETURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

The main aim of the chapter is to enlighten more on the already existing information pertaining the research topic under study. It gives relevant information on occupational stress that has so far been gathered by various scholars. The chapter describes theoretical framework in relation to occupational stress and employee performance, and also highlights the research gap that gave rise to the study to be conducted.

#### 2.2 Defining Occupational Stress

Occupational stress is of growing concern as it leads to psychological and physical problems for the employees. Researchers have argued that occupational stress, either as a result of its detrimental effects on the health of the individual or directly, led to low productivity, high absenteeism, tiredness, low enthusiasm for work, low creativity, and high dissatisfaction with work as cited by Radha Damle (2012) from Cooper and Marshall, 1978; Matteson and Ivancevich 1987). Pestonjee.1999 stated that the concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Hans Selye. Stress is described as force, pressure, strain or strong effort with reference to an objector person.

WHO, 2003 defined occupational stress is defined as the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. Stress has been defined in different ways over the years. Originally, it was regarded as pressure from the environment, then as pressure within the person (kazmi Amjad and Khan, 2008). Selye 1964 in Fevre et al 2003 stated that stress is a set of physical and psychological responses to adverse conditions or influences.

Occupational stress is also defined as a disruption of the emotional stability of the individual that induces a state of disorganization in personality and behavior at work (Nwadiani 2006). Bridger

et al also referred occupational stress as job stressors which may refer to characteristics of the workplace that poses a threat to the individual. The meaning of stress has transformed over the ages. Originally it was considered as environmental pressure and strain within the person. Occupational stress is a physical and psychological state that results when the resources or the individual are not adequate to meet up with the demands of the situation. Hence stress is more possible in some conditions than others and in some individuals than others (Michi 2002)

Merriam webster (1998) in (A0161150106) defined stress as a response to a demand that is placed upon a person, or a condition where one experiences a gap between the present and desired state. Stress is also defined as a chemical or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension and may be a factor in disease causation; it is normal reaction when the brain recognizes a threat.

Selye (1976) cited by Radha Damle (2012) explained stress as a reaction of an individual to a stressor, thus the non-specific response of the body to any demand. Radha Damle (2012) noted that Everly (1989) claimed that stress was a physiological response. Academics defined occupational stress as the physical and emotional response that occurred when workers perceived an imbalance between their work loads and their ability to tackle it. Scholars who supported that stress is a response argued that stress was a response to biological and psychosocial stressors.

Habs Seyle (1956) cited in Sengupta (2007) noted that stress of exhilarating, creative, successful work is beneficial while that of failure, humiliation or infection is detrimental. Habs Seyle further classified stress into two types a) eustress b) distress

- a) Eustress: this is positive, pleasant or curative stress. Stress is also seen to have beneficial effect to ones behaviour. Eustress is also seen from events which led to a stimulating effect that can result in personal growth.
- b) Distress: Dysfunctional or negative stress. This type of stress affects one's concentration and performance.it usually demotivates someone from working.

Simmons et al (2001) noted that eustress and distress could be distinguished based on affective state. Thus hope, meaningfulness and positive affect were significant indicators of eustress. Moreover the distressful or eustressful nature of any particular stimulus was also found to be governed by how one interpreted it and chose to react to it. When an individual perceived stress positively than the result was eustress, negative perception of stress led to distress. The above two concepts suggested that along with the degree of demand the perception of the stimulus was vital to bring a difference between eustress and distress (Fevre, M.L.,et.al.,2003).

All the definitions however agree on the fact that stress is an individual perception which implies that other people are more vulnerable to it than others are and other situations are more likely to have higher rates of occupational stress than others are. It is a transaction between the worker (his/her abilities and knowledge) and work pressures or demands resulting in a mismatch or inequality. Kendall *et al* (2000) agree with the notion that stress is a constantly changing and circular process that raises significant implication for research and practise.

## **2.3 Types of Occupational Stress**

Walt (1996), describe three types of stress; Neustress, Distress and Eustress. Neustress is neutral stress; arousal is neither harmful nor helpful on the mind or body. When arousal is too high or too low, distress ensues resulting in harm to mind and body. Eustress is a positive stress or helpful arousal that promotes health, energy, satisfaction and peak performance. Eustress is helpful in that it helps us to respond quickly, forcefully and physically in emergencies and also to prepare for deadlines

There are 4 types of stress namely: acute, traumatic, chronic and episodic acute stress [Ekundayo (2014) as cited by Sharon N (2015)]. The types are listed below:

### **2.3.1 Acute stress**

Is the most common type of stress and is easily diagnosed. The causes of stress are very clear and one can clearly state his/her problem. This type of stress is easy to handle. Effects are short

term and temporary damage to the body. Recovery is usually quick after the removal of the stressor. Acute stress can happen to anyone and everyone at some point in their lives. Acute stress is situational and is connected to passing/fleeting issues it's the kind of stress that's only around for a little while, and it can actually be kind of fun. Facing a new and exciting challenge can be thrilling, but still, the feelings associated with acute stress deserve our attention.

### 2.3.2 Traumatic stress

This is a very severe stress response originating from a devastating event or extreme experience. Examples include events such as natural disasters (volcanoes, earthquakes), rape or sexual assault. The victim slowly recovers after the problem has been solved or after a series of counseling sessions. However the victim may face a problem of post trauma stress disorder. Symptoms may include flashbacks, nightmares, irritability, tension and over cautiousness.

### 2.3.3 Chronic stress

Chronic is the type of stress which wears down the individual daily and a normal working day seems ridiculously perpetual. This goes for years without any interventions. It would seem as if there is no visible escape because of the relentless demands and pressures. This may result into physical damage or even death. Robert Maurer 2014 cited by Sharon Ngomana 2015 argues that for some workers, usually managers, stress is more like fear in disguise. He goes on to explain that the symptoms we associate with stress some of which he identifies as muscle tension, change in appetite, trouble sleeping.

### 2.3.4 Acute episodic stress

Acute episodic is usually experienced by people who are workaholic, very competitive, impatient, always in a hurry and easily get angry and forceful in speech (Ekundayo, 2014). These kinds of people are always very chaotic, late and want to handle too much

work than they can. These individuals will not know or admit that they are stressed. These people also affect their co-workers

## **2.4 Sources of Occupational Stress**

Stress is much more common in employees at lower levels of workplace hierarchies, where they have less control over their work condition Beheshtifar and Nazarian (2013). Colquitt et al (2011) asserted that during company restructuring it cause stress among employees because of the fear to lose their job. Company restructuring is hard on workers and reduced productivity is unavoidable due to stress. Jones et al (2008) negative reactions towards change occur because change causes increased pressure, stress and uncertainty for employees hence affecting the performance of the employees.

Pestonjee (1999) suggested three important sectors of life from which stress originated, i) job and the organization, ii) social sector, and iii) intra-psychic sector. The job and organizational sector referred to the work environment. The social sector referred to the social and cultural context of one's life. The intra-psychic sector encompasses those things which were intimate and personal to an individual.

According to Mukhalipi (2014), occupational stress is due to excessive demands and pressures which can be caused by poor work design, poor management and unsatisfactory working conditions According to Leka *et al* (2003), having too much or too little to do, limited opportunity for further study and training, scant promotion prospects, under and over promotion and all the other factors that affect job security can be a source of occupational Stress

Personal relationship with other co-workers can also contribute to occupational stress. Bickford (2005) is of the view that poor relationships with subordinates, superiors and co-workers at work may cause job related stress. Conflicts with colleagues/managers also contribute to occupational stress. When people feel under pressure to achieve or feel there are high expectations related to long hours, high volumes, or perceived pressure from management, tensions may run high and the result is increased conflict in the workplace.

Leka *et al* (2003) believe unclear procedures for dealing with work issues as well as inadequate, inconsiderate and unsupportive supervision at work may result in occupational stress. According to Houtman and Jettinghoff (2007), individual differences of the worker such as age, education, experience and coping style are most important in predicting whether certain job specifications will result in stress.

Other causes of stress at work place are insecurity and slow career progression. Employees who feel they have been promoted too slowly, feel insecure about their job future or feel their ambitions are being thwarted are more likely to suffer from stress (Davis 2012).

Erkutlu and Chafra, (2006) aver that external controls from superior are other causes of stress at the work. For example a chief commandant, may create stress to a member of his organisation because it is only he or she who makes decisions. Lack of top to down approach within an organisation is also cause occupational stress among workers. The employees feel like their rights are being abused because they are not involved in the decision making whereas they are the ones working. Delayed remuneration or salaries also cause stress among workers because the employees will be unable to meet their needs as the bread winner. Participation and control may sometimes be referred to as autonomy. It is where the worker has no ability to control his/ her designated tasks or has no say in the decision making process that affects the way these tasks are done. This often in many cases results in occupational stress (Bickford, 2005). The greatest stressor in the workplace is lack of control. Employees are highly stressed when they feel like they have no control over their participation or the outcome of their work.

Karl Max cited by Sharon Ngomana (2015) further pursued psychological issues as he explored the horrendous ways industrial capitalism abused workers in his book *Das Kapital (1867/1999)*. According to Max, the causes for this situation lay in the growing specialization and division of work in workplaces which further treated employees as commodities in a capitalist economic system.

The treadmill syndrome is also another cause of occupational stress, employees who consistently have too much or too little to do creates a lot of stress. Too much or too little work to do also

lead to occupational stress for it exerts certain pressure within an employee. If the volume of work mismatches or surpasses the skills, knowledge and abilities of a worker, this causes stress (Bickford, 2005).. Some employees are highly stressed because they simply have too many responsibilities. Others work around the clock, not necessarily on the clock, but throughout the day and at home. These are generally the employees who have too much to do and too many responsibilities. Casual disruptions keep employees from getting their work done thus keeping the worker behind schedule

Miners often work long hours which itself has been considered to be a source of stress. The nature of the mining industry requires miners to work long hours often with rotating rosters including night and twelve hour shifts. The pressure and strain of long hours can lead to stress and impact on relationships and well-being, if not managed correctly. Most commonly reported issues amongst mine workers include; anxiety, depression and substance abuse.

Dale collie 2004 noted that mistrust, unfairness, and office politics these situations keep everyone on edge and uncertain about the future. Management of trust and fairness is just as important as any other management tool. If people cannot trust management, performance goes down. And, everyone is affected if even one employee is treated unfairly.

No feedback good or bad. People want to know how they are doing, and whether they are meeting expectations. If you don't communicate your thoughts on their performance, they are stressed about how well they are doing. Also failure to show appreciation for employee participation generates stress that endangers future efforts (Dale collie 2004).

## **2.5 Defining Employees Performance**

Scullen (2000) is of the notation that job performance comprises four aspects, thus 1) human performance 2) administrative performance 3) general performance 4) technical performance. These four aspects constitute different dimensions of job performance which are likely to be affected by occupational stress.

Performance refers to the amount of useful work accomplished and can be likened to an achievement. Performance is considered as high when, what is produced or services rendered is



much better than the expected. At organizational level, performance means achieving or accomplishing goals of the organization and is often measured in terms of goods produced or services rendered (Edvardsson, 2005).

Most organisations use key performance indicators (KIPS) to define and measure progress toward organisational goal (Leboo and Nimalathan, 2010). KIPS are financial and non-financial metrics such as gross sale, production or profit for a given year that is used to assess extent of achievement of organisations' goals. The success of an organisation is marked by the level to which it achieves what it has set out to do (Glasser, 2005).

According to Richard, Devinney, Yip and Johnson (2009), business organisational performance encompasses three specific areas of firm outcomes: financial, product market and shareholder return. Other indicators of organization performance are quantity of goods produced and the profit generated annually. Many factors have been identified to influence performance of organisations. Jankingthong and Rurkkhum (2012), aver that transformational leadership, resources, work environment, organisational justice and work engagement significantly affect performance of firms.

## **2.6 Impacts of Occupational Stress On Employee Performance**

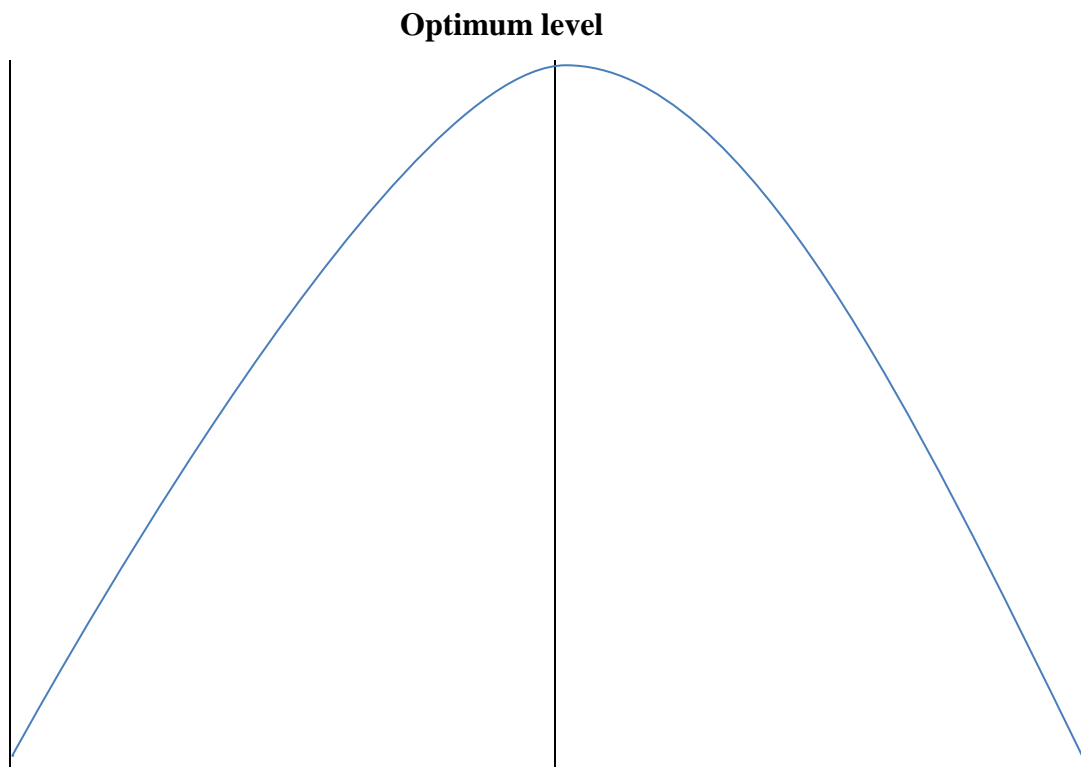
Occupational stress affects organizational performance by reducing productivity and efficiency which affect the organization negatively (Dua 1994 cited in Reskin, 2008). Ahmed and ramzan (2013) found a negative correlation between stress and job performance i.e. as the stress increase the job performance goes down and vice-versa. Meneze. (2005) stated that occupational stress has become a challenge for the employer organizations as it results in low productivity, increased absenteeism and collection of other employee problems like alcoholism, drug abuse, hypertension and host of cardiovascular problems

Stress has significant impact on company and people performance and it terribly affects health of employees (Mimura and Griffiths, 2003 in Shah et al, 2012). Rubina et al. (2008) too found a

negative relationship between job stress and job performance. However the male employees were found to be affected more than their female counter parts. Munir and Islam (2011) tested relationship between work stressors like role ambiguity, workload pressure, home-work interface, performance pressure, relationship with others and role conflicts on one side and job performance on the other with motivation as mediator and found that „role conflict“ and „role ambiguity“ have a positive relation with stressors against the common notion while the relationship is found to be negative between other stressors and job performance.

Deshinger (2003) suggested that different aspects of employee job performance that are likely to be affected by stress include Productivity, Job Satisfaction / Morale, Absenteeism, Decision Making Abilities, Accuracy, Creativity, Attention to Personal Appearance, Organizational Skills, Courtesy Cooperation , Initiative , Reliability, Alertness , Perseverance and Tardiness.

Cox 2001 is of the view that When occupational stress upsurges, it reaches optimal level where the output is higher thus there will be a positive impact of stress, but if stress increases further it reduces output thus negative impact of stress. Figure 1 summarizes how occupational stress affects performance of an employee



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**stress**

**Figure 2.1: The Relationship between Occupational Stress and Employee Performance**

**Source: (Cox, 2001)**

Sengupta (2007) stated that stress may cause physiological, behavioural or even psychological effects. Physiological effect of stress cause hormone release which triggers fight or flight response in humans. There is increase heart rate, blood pressure, and sweating. Stress has been tied to heart disease. Because of the increase in heart rate and blood pressure, prolonged stress increases the tension that is put on the arteries. It also affects the immune system which is why cold, flu illness and headaches usually show up during a challenge. Behavioural effects may cause people to be jumpy, excitable, or even irritable. The effects of stress may cause some people to drink or smoke heavily, neglect exercise or proper nutrition. Thus workers come to work under the influence of alcohol. Psychological effects of stress may decrease the ability to work or interact effectively with other people, and be less able to make good decisions. Stress has also been known to play a part in anxiety and depression (Sengupat, 2007).

Occupational stress, also affects the quality of work of employees and that of the organizations they work for (Maslach, 2003). Helman (1994), states that not all stress is harmful to an organism; at moderate level it is an asset but at a higher level it is a liability to an individual. Stress can help in growth and development of human potential; thus necessary in our daily activities. Melgosa, (2010) noted that persistent stress is likely to cause serious organic and mental disorder. The organic and psychological effects of stress are briefed in table 2.1.

**Table `2.1 Showing the Organic And Psychological Effects Of Stress**

| Organic effects of stress  | Psychological effects of stress   |
|--|---|
| <p>Many organic diseases originated from mental state, work and family pressure, financial problems, uncertainty about future and worries trigger stress, and the following diseases may follow: gastric ulcer, irritable colon, hypertension, stress can be behind so called psychosomatic reactions acne, allergy, backache, asthma, impotence, obesity, migraine, anxiety, bronchitis</p> | <p>Problems caused by excessive stress.</p> <p><b>Thought processes:</b> difficulty to think logically, memory failure, lack of concentration, mistakes,</p> <p><b>Emotions:</b> ongoing tension, fear of disease, impatience, irritability, inferiority feeling.</p> <p><b>Behavior:</b> decrease in verbal fluency, risk use of noxious substances, work absenteeism, sleeping difficulties, problem with relationships</p> |

Source: Melgosa (2010)

## 2.7 Strategies to Manage Occupational Stress

Seibt et al., (2008) is of the view that stress is always present among employees however it can be reduced by improving the working conditions and quality of benefits in the companies. Several studies have examined the effectiveness of stress management programs

Maddi and Kobasa (1984) cited by Radha Damle(2012) talked about two forms of coping: (a) Transformational, and (b) Regressive. Transformational coping involved altering the events so that they were less stressful. Accordingly, one had to interact with the events, think about them optimistically and act towards them decisively, thus changing them in a less stressful direction.

Regressive approach, on the other hand, included a strategy wherein one thought about the events pessimistically and acted evasively to avoid contact with them.

According to Stoica and Buicu (2010), an Organizational approach involves the establishment of a friendly work environment which has favorable job characteristics, labor relations, a healthy organizational structure and culture. These may include things such as professional advice (seminars on weight and substance abuse control) and provision of technical support (Ekundayo, 2014).

## **2.8 Knowledge Gap**

The field of occupational stress has been researched by various scholars. Occupational stress has not yet been completely researched in Africa. Most industrial occupations have been fully studied. However there is limited information on occupational stress of the mining industry especially in Zimbabwe to be specific. Few researches have been undertaken in Zimbabwe to fully investigate the field of occupational stress in mining industry especially coal mines. As such, this study seeks to avail the occupational stress and its impacts situation in such an industry in Zimbabwe. This study reveals the impacts of occupational stress, examines its patterns and establishes relationships amongst chosen variables as well as examining the coping strategies employed at Hwange Colliery.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.1. Introduction**

The chapter focused on the research methodology that has been employed by the author in coming up with this research project. Rajasekars *et al* (2013) postulate that research methodology is a systematic way to solve a problem which essentially outlines the procedures by which researchers go about their work of describing, explaining and predicting phenomena gaining knowledge. The chapter is going to explain the research methodology used for the project. The research design and some reasons for selected research design is highlighted in the chapter. The population sample for the research project and reasons for chosen population sample shall also be discussed. Preferred population sample is to be provided in this chapter. The preferred methods of data collection shall be explained and their strength and weakness will be highlighted

### **3.2 Research Design**

Dooley (2003) defines research design as the plan for collecting and utilizing data so that desired information can be obtained. Bryman and Bell (2007) view a research design as the framework which provides for the collection and analysis of data. A research design can be defined as the general plan of how to answer the research questions (Saunders et al, 2009). There are two types of research design which are qualitative and quantitative (Creswell, 2012). According to Creswell (2012:13) Quantitative describe a research problem through a description of trends or a need for an explanation of the relationship among variables. Qualitative is exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central Phenomenon. The cause for the use of both designs was to come up with the magnitude of the problem and develop appropriate and viable measures in line with the problem.

Qualitative techniques employed in this research include open ended questionnaires. This will be used to identify sources and examining the coping strategies of occupational stress at HCCL. For quantitative methods closed ended questionnaires will be used to examine the patterns and

establish relationships between stress and workers performance. The two approaches complimented each other to result in a fully robust research.

The researcher engaged a qualitative research design since it provided an understanding and description of people's personal emotions and behavior at work. This design is associated with research gears such as interviews and field observations which were used to explore the behavior, perspectives and performance of HCCL workers at work.

### **3.3 Target Population**

Best and Kahn (1993), define target population as any group of individuals that have one or more characteristics in common that are of interest to the researcher . Target population refers to the entire group of individuals which the researcher is interested in generalizing the conclusions. Creswell (2012), postulates that target population is a group of individuals (or a group of organizations) with some common defining characteristic that the researcher can identify and study. Luck and Rubin, (2005), states that this population is very important in any research as it determines how sampling is going to be done and drives the whole research methodology. The target areas of the research were production department and services department. The researcher focused on all workers at HCCL as they are all likely to be affected by stress. The total population is 450 workers including the management staff as it is responsible for introducing coping strategies to deal with stressing situations at the work place. Above all, they are also subjected to occupational stress as they will be in the spotlight trying to balance and meet targets as well as respond to emerging issues affecting the company.

### **3.4 Sampling and Sampling Procedure**

Sampling is the selection of a representative part of the population from which data for empirical analysis is drawn (Stoker, 1989). A sample is a subgroup of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population. Melville and Goddard

(2005) stress the importance of sampling and further explain that if the population is very large, it can be satisfactorily covered through sampling. Leedy, (1992) argued that in a bid to get a fair and reasonable research information for a large population, the researcher has to use 10% to 20% of the sample size so as to represent the whole population. Marvatsi (2004) notes that a 10% sample gives more representation of the total population, so given the huge number of population that needed to be covered only 10% was selected. In order to make inferences about the distinctiveness of the population to gather information for the study from the targeted population, the researcher considered 10% of the employees to represent the whole mine population of 450 workers production and services).The researcher considered 10% due to time constraints, as the research targeted large population was too big; this was going to be difficult to complete the research considering the time given to carry out the study. The researcher will use targeted population of forty-five (45) from the line managers and general staff. Management will also be targeted as it is the body which is responsible for introducing coping strategies to deal with stressing situations and jobs.

The total number of mine workers and the total number of employees for each department was used to calculate ratios for each department's contribution on the sample size. This was intended to promote equal representation according to the department's number of employees. This also allowed the researcher to have more time with the targeted population to acquire more information of underlying issues or problems under study. This was also devised to reduce problems of over and under representation of employees per department, thus promoting accurate workers' representation in the study. The researcher is going to use probability and non probability sampling. The researcher will select individuals from the population who are representative of that population.

### **3.5. Research Instruments**

This section outlines the methods which were employed to collect primary and secondary data for the research. Creswell (2012) argues that data collection means identifying and selecting individuals for a study, obtaining their permission to study them and gathering information by asking people questions or observing their behaviors. Primary data is the data collected from



first-hand-experience and it has not been published yet and is more dependable, authentic and objective (Churchill 1995). Hox and Boeije (2007:593) primary data is the data collected for a specific research goal. This data will be collected through the use of questionnaires, field observations and interviews. Secondary data for this research was generated from secondary data sources such as historical documents (documentary analysis), published books and journals. Secondary data is the data collected by someone other than the user (Moore, 2006). Cameron and Schiphorst (2008:17) postulates that secondary data will be used to analyse health and safety measures that can enhance good performance, past studies and case studies will be used and surveys from all the available internet sources.

### **3.5.1 Questioner Survey**

A questionnaire is a research instrument consisting of a series of questions and other prompts for the purpose of gathering information from respondents (Gillham, 2008). The questionnaire had three sections; A, B, C and D. Section A comprised of personal details. Section B comprise of the magnitude or severity of occupational stress among workers. Section C comprised of details related to Sources of occupational stress whilst section D comprised of questions related to impacts of stress and stress management. The researcher used closed ended questions mostly to collect demographic data and on other questions which demanded the respondents to provide specific answers. Questionnaires were administered to all the respondents who were sampled. The convenience sampling technique was employed in choosing respondents. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to help in interpreting the questions in cases where the respondent does not understand. The questionnaire was designed by first specifying clear and unambiguous goals for the study. Secondly it was designed by providing a clear, concise and unambiguous formulation of who the target population was and this allowed the researcher to ask relevant background questions and to formulate the questions in such a way that it was understood by the respondents

### 3.5.2 Interviews

According to Dooley (2003), an interview is a conversation between two people (the interviewer and the interviewee) where questions are asked by the interviewer to obtain information from the interviewee. Face to face structured and semi structured interviews were used in this study. Face to face interviews are vital in that they permit for more opportunity of detailed questions, further questioning can be done during the interview to obtain more data, also the response rate is usually higher as compared to administering questionnaires and non-verbal data can be collected through observation.

The researcher designed short and precise interview guides with research questions which were designated for experts in the field of study. The target group included the line managers, the SHE manager and the workers. Questions asked were in relation to how stress is affecting workers performance. Interviews were engaged so as to get in depth know how on the sources of stress and the impacts being exposed to the workers performance. Another merit of using interviews was that sensitive topics were discussed and probed further on which could have been difficult to address in a questionnaire. This method allows the interviewer to alter questions depending on how the interviewee is answering

The answers were later presented in Chapter 4. Face to face interviews enabled the researcher to build solid relationships with the respondent because before and during the interview informal discussions were held. This helped both parties to elucidate any fears and there was openness during the interviews hence accurate information was obtained

**Table 3.1 Interviewees and rationale for choosing them**

| Interviewee               | Rational for choosing them  |
|---------------------------|---|
| Safety officer            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This individual has in depth knowledge on the changes taking place in the company that may be potential sources of occupational stress. Generally, he has an overall understanding of what affects workers and why.</li> <li>• Is responsible for company SHE policy, manuals and procedures implementation.</li> <li>• Is responsible for training employees on safe operating procedures.</li> <li>• Carries out daily plant inspections, monitors working behaviours , Keeps record of workers OSH</li> <li>• Receives complains from workers, Works hand in hand with workers representatives</li> </ul> |
| Workers representative    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This individual is a representative of workers and their rights</li> <li>• Has better understanding on issues affecting fellow colleagues. S/he also has an insight of what should be done to manage occupational stress and its impacts.</li> </ul>   |
| Human resources personnel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receives workers complains and problems.</li> <li>• These know the challenges faced by workers on a daily basis and sometimes know the sources of these challenges</li> </ul>  |
| Nurse in charge           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attends to all occupational stress cases by conducting some counselling and keeps all clinical records of the employees.</li> <li>• Witnesses workers’ burnout on a daily basis. Through counselling sessions, s/he gets in-depth knowledge of the sources of occupational stress.</li> </ul>  |

### **3.5.3 Observations**

Research connections, 2013 states that Field observations involve gathering data primarily through close visual inspection of a natural setting. Harrell and Bradley (2009) suggested that direct observation is a data collection method in which the researcher does not participate in the interactions. Field observations offer data that is more accurate as compared to questionnaires as people will not be under pressure to perform or act differently since they will not be aware that they are being observed, it also assisted in gathering data left out by respondents. Direct observations were carried out to back up and validate information obtained from questionnaires and secondary data sources. Observations allow the study of people's behavior hence a better understanding of how workers behave at work whilst stressed.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Afsaw, Argaw and Bayissa (2015), states that data analysis is done to ensure completeness and logical arrangements. Data analysis is the presentation of data obtained from the research (Creswell, 2007). Creswell (2012), postulates that the researcher will analyze the data to address the research questions. Data analysis is defined as a practice in which, unorganized or unfinished data is ordered and organized, so that useful information can be highlighted. Data analysis is the process of transforming raw data into useable information that is often presented in the form of a published analytical article (Statistics Canada 2014). Some questions may call for describing trends in the data, and the researcher will use descriptive analysis such as for the spread of the scores and the relative ranking of the scores. Quantitative data was used to establish relationships between occupational stress and workers performance at the work place. This study produce both qualitative and quantitative data and each will be employed to a suitable technique. Questionnaires establish relationship between and amongst variables of occupational stress. Statistical data will be used to analyze data using statistical tools in SPSS.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

Creswell (2012:159) argues that the scores from an instrument are to be stable and consistent. The scores should be nearly the same when the researcher administer multiple times at different times. Scores should be consistent that when a person answers a certain question one way, the next individual should consistently answer closely related in the same way. The researcher will use Cronbach's alpha in-order to obtain reliable and is commonly used when the researcher have multiple Likert questions in a survey questionnaires that form a scale to and wish to determine if the scale is reliable. Cronbach's alpha is a measure used to assess the reliability, or internal consistency, of a set of scale or test items (Tavakol and Dennick, (2011).

### **3.9 Ethical issues**

Creswell, 2012 states that data collection should be ethical and it should respect individuals and sites. Research Ethics is defined here to be the ethics of the planning, conduct, and reporting of research and research ethics should include protections of human and animal subjects, relationships between researchers and those that will be affected by their research and options for promoting ethical conduct in research (Resources for Research Ethics Education 2013). Permission was obtained before starting to collect data; it is not only a part of informed consent process but also an ethical practice. During the data collection the researcher protected the anonymity of individuals by assigning numbers to returned instruments and keeping the identity of individuals, thus it offers confidentiality and privacy to participants. This research did not falsify, misinterpret or fabricate any data so as to protect the respondents. It was also objective as it avoided any bias in data presentation analysis. The researcher viewed data as confidential and not to share it with other participants or individuals outside of the project.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

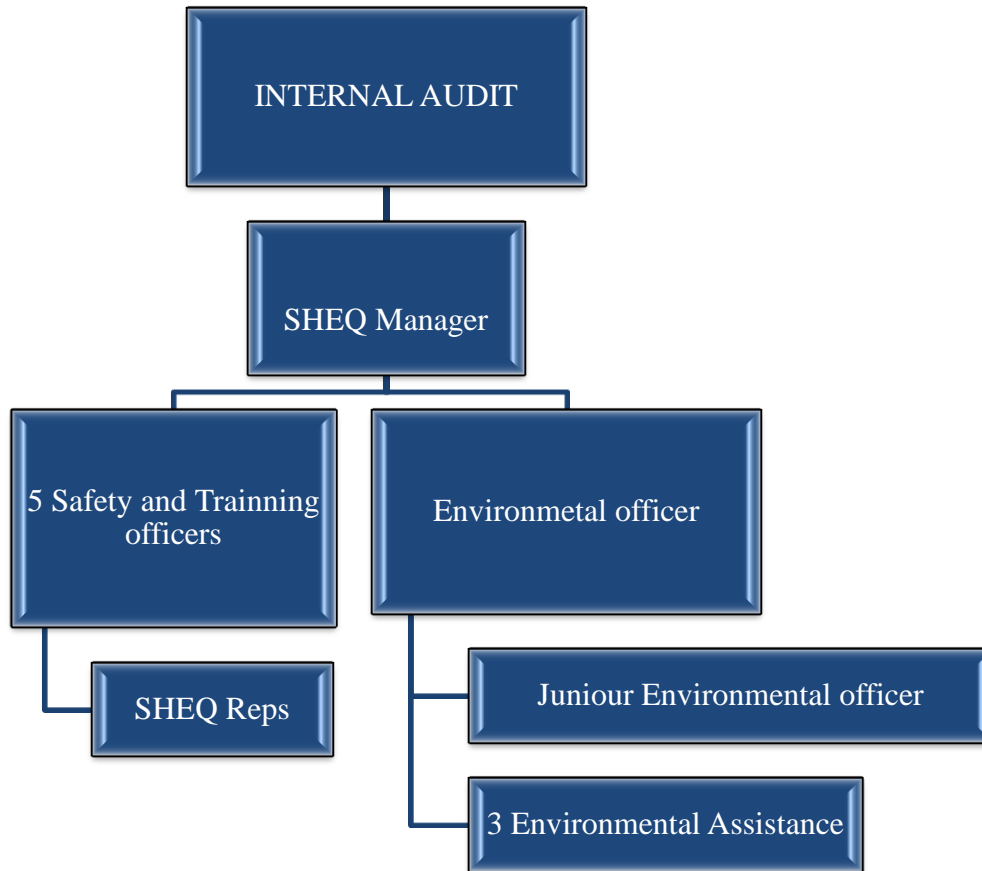
#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research findings and analysis of data that was gathered. The chapter consists of data representation, reliability and ethical consideration between variables. The researcher used SPSS in order to analyze the data. The discussion is guided by the research objectives. The first part presents the findings that were gathered from primary and secondary sources of data which included interviews, questionnaires and company documents. The second part outlines the analysis of the findings and the meanings drawn from the study.

## **4.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

### **4.2.1 Safety Health Environment and Quality Section**

Hwange Colliery Company's safety issues are handled by the SHEQ section. Hence in this instance, occupational stress falls under the SHEQ section. This section is under Internal Audit department, The Safety, Health, Environment and Quality Manager (SHEQM) is the head of section, with five Safety and Training officers, one Environmental Officer, one Junior Environmental Officer and three Environmental Assistants. The SHEQ department hierarchy is illustrated by an organogram refer to fig 2 below. The department directly reports to the Mine Managing Director pertaining to SHEQ issues and is the secretariat to the safety committee in the Organisation. The main function of the department is to Advise, Assist and Audit the Organisation on Safety, Health and Environmental Quality issues. The department is guided by the SHEQ Policy which also falls in line with by the EMS 14001:2004 and OSHAS 18001:2007. The SHEQ policy is reviewed annually to ensure that Safety, Health, Environmental and Quality Sustainability are maintained to the highest standards. The organogram of the section is illustrated in Figure 4.1.



**Figure 4.1: Organogram of the SHEQ Section**

### 4.3 Causes of Occupational Stress

The possible sources of occupational stress were grouped into two categories namely; personal factors and work related factors. Personal related factors were analyzed from the data on age, sex, academic qualifications, job experience, family size, salary range and home pressure. Work related factors also contribute to sources of occupational stress. In this research, such factors were examined to determine the level of its contribution to perceived levels of stress by workers and the impacts encountered. The following aspects were analyzed; unfriendly work site, conflicting work roles, performing untrained task, workload, working hours and safety issues.

### 4.4 Occupational Stress and Gender



The gender of a person can make them more exposed to occupational stress or it can help them cope with stress better. Table 4.1 reflects that there are a fewer number of women who are highly stressed as compared to man. However, one thing is certain; either they are highly or moderately stressed which translates to generally high levels of stress. This is because the working environment at HCCL is very tough and the conditions are usually bad. HR officer postulated that, " *due to promotion of gender equality there has been fair distribution of work, most workers no longer consider the gender of a person hence some women end up being tasked to perform some duties beyond their ability and this has led to increase in occupational stress.* The SHEQ manager stated that, " *The work environment is male invested and thus the competition for survival becomes trivial with the possibility of resulting in work stress among women.* " Women are bound to be more stressed because of the work environment and the type of work they are required to do.

**Table 4.1: Showing Gender of Employee and Their Perceived Level of Occupational Stress.**

|          |        | levels of stress |       |            |        |
|----------|--------|------------------|-------|------------|--------|
|          |        | not sure         | less  | Moderately | highly |
|          |        | Count            | Count | Count      | Count  |
| sex of   | male   | 0                | 4     | 7          | 10     |
| employee | female | 0                | 4     | 4          | 6      |

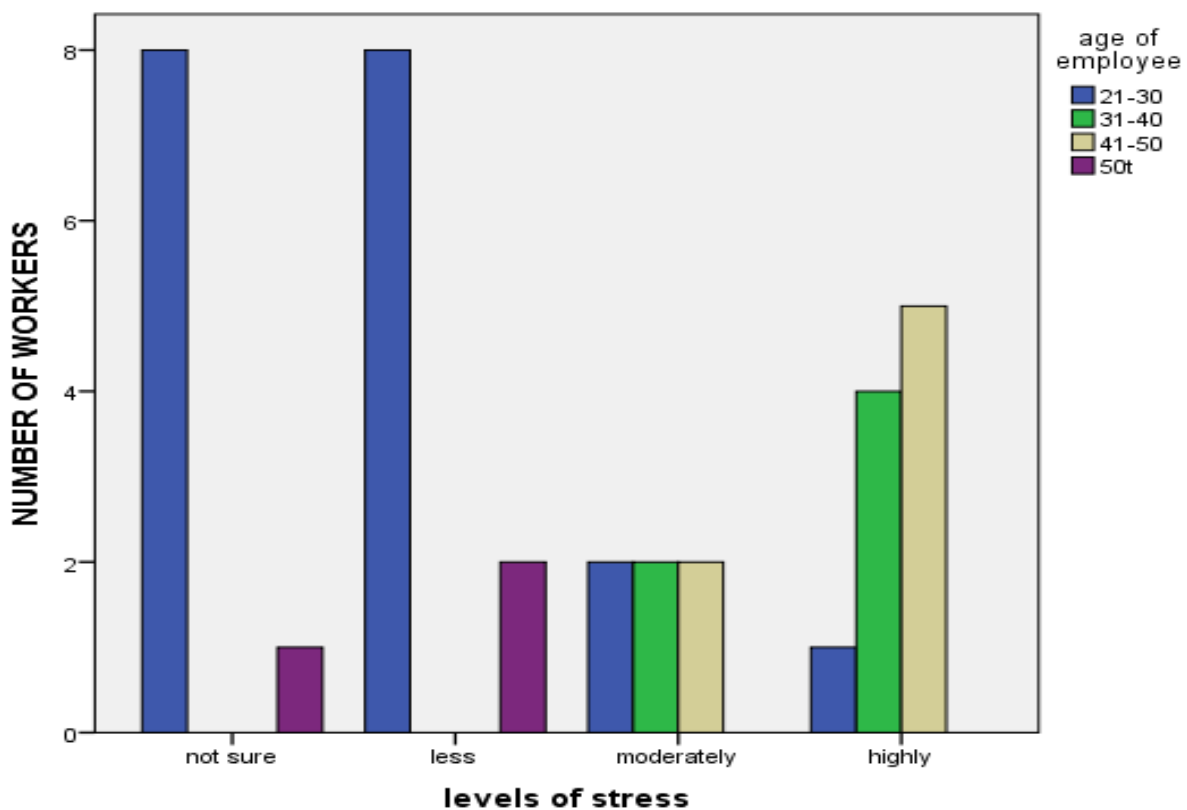
*Source: Field survey (2017)*

#### 4.5 Occupational Stress and Age

The age of a person can determine his/her level of stress. Occupational stress tends to differ with age group. Smith et al (2000) who found that the majority of workers under their study (20.8%) were highly stressed were aged between 41 and 50 years. workers are in a 'midlife crisis' where by now after several years of hard work they feel they should be awarded for their labour.

Figure 4.1 clearly shows that the age group with the highest percentage of workers who are highly stressed is 41-50 years. This is probably because the age group have high dependency ratio. These include the spouse, children, and other family members dependent on the worker.

These need to be fed, clothed, sheltered, hence will require a lot of resources for their upkeep on them and most of their children are now attending their tertiary level hence a lot of expenses. In addition the HR officer stated that, “most workers around the age of 30-50 have served the company for a number of years and by now they expect to be awarded for labor through promotions.” These workers have spent a long time in the company and know how good the working conditions were in the past years hence knows the difference. They have been worst affected by change and a deteriorating working environment as most of the workers highlighted. They are going through a transition and it will take time for them to adapt to the situation.



**Figure 4.2:** Bar Graphs Showing Cross Tabulation of Level of Stress and Age of Employee

In an interview the SHEQ manager said, “in the past years it was rare to hear of an old madala failing to perform their duties due to stress, however now it has become a daily drum beat because the company is no longer catering for the employees personal needs hence workers are

*now forced to divert their salary to cover up other requirements. The company has also reduced age of retirement to 55years, and this law is affecting employees in this age group. Some of them have realized that in their years of toil they have not yielded much to improve their lives since they have been staying in company houses.”*

The next group which is considered to be affected by stress is 31-40 years age group. This is probably due to high demands these workers have from their dependents. Some of the workers are easily affected by changes occurring in the company. The workers in the age group of 51 and above are less stressed. This is because these workers are just a footstep away from approaching retirement. As such, they are not easily shaken with the changes in their working environment. Also, in their age, they are most likely to have fewer dependents and more income earners hence the burden is lessened. The 20-30 age group are less stressed because most of them are single have little responsibilities hence their income is adequate for them. A few who are married are still in their early years of marriage and have not yet encountered marriage problems.

#### **4.6 Marital Status and Home Pressure**

Some occupational stress does not originate from the work place but they actually originate from home. People with cognitive distortions and negative thinking patterns may also be a source of occupational stress. This is because sometimes at work there are no support systems designed for domestic problems and or at home there won't be enough support for work problems yet work and home overspill into each other's circles (Leka and Jain, 2010). This then weakens a worker's ability to cope even with other stressors at work exposing him or her to stress, thus leading to poor performance.

**Table 4.2: Showing Frequency Level Of Stress And Marital Status.**

|              | Frequenc<br>y | Percent | Valid<br>Percent | Cumulative<br>Percent |
|--------------|---------------|---------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Valid single | 8             | 22.9    | 22.9             | 22.9                  |

|          |    |       |       |       |
|----------|----|-------|-------|-------|
| married  | 7  | 20.0  | 20.0  | 42.9  |
| widowed  | 7  | 20.0  | 20.0  | 62.9  |
| divorced | 13 | 37.1  | 37.1  | 100.0 |
| Total    | 35 | 100.0 | 100.0 |       |

*Source: Field survey (2017)*

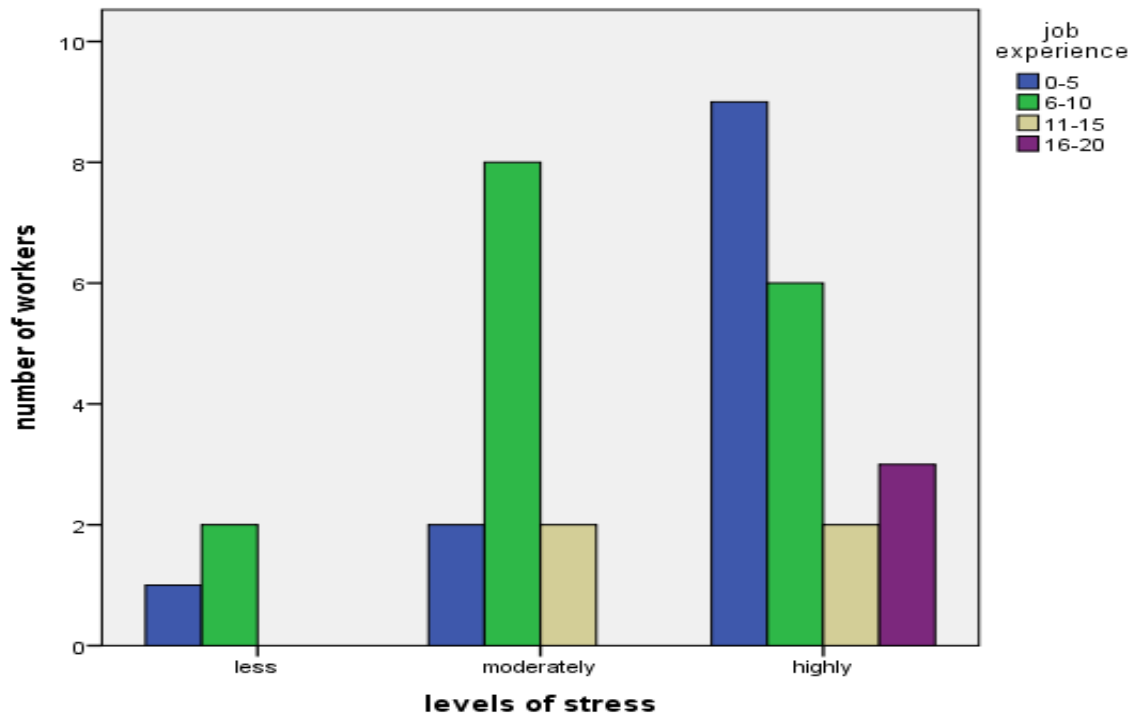
Table 4.2 show that married (20%) and divorcee (37.1%) employees are affected by home pressures as they have agreed that they suffer from home pressures. Single employees also show that they are not affected by home pressures as the results shows that majority have agreed to be less stressed. Married employees at HCCL they suffer from home pressures as they are supposed to cater for their children at home while there are said to have not received their salaries in full for the past 37 months and poor work life balance. In an interview with the peer educator, he revealed that most workers showed signs of frustration and even irritability during sessions of counseling *‘most workers said they always got a bit angry with relatives and friends especially if they wanted to probe into their lives. Some even went on to the extent of disassociating from loved ones’*. From the above findings, it was concluded that indeed occupational stress affected workers and their social and work lives. Vokic and Bogdanic (2007) stated that most married employees will be fighting to balance work life and family as a way of reducing home pressures, although these employees will have high levels of stress home pressures will affect both the employer and employee as it will result in reduction on job performance.

The SHEQ rep of HCCL mentioned in an interview that *“most of the workers are stressed because the company is no longer catering for the employee’s needs, the company used to pay school fees and buy stationery for our children but since they have stopped giving us our salaries they have also stopped catering for our kids. Some employees have to pay maintenance because we have a lot of divorcees in the company and we have witnessed a number of employees getting arrested due to failure of paying maintenance.”* The current situation of the company is also contributing to the rise of home pressure. . Kossek et al. (2011), these authors argue that we need to form a better understanding of informal workplace support and how it affects work-life balance although it seems plausible that informal networks are equally as valuable in predicting other, related outcomes (i.e., the experience of job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational

citizenship behaviors). Most married employees will be fighting to balance work life and family as a way of reducing home pressures, although these employees will have high levels of stress. Home pressures will affect both the employer and employee as it will result in reduction on job performance.

#### **4.7 Perceived Levels of Occupational Stress and Job Experience**

Makasa (2013) stated that individuals with greater experience exhibit lower stress than those with fewer years of experience. This statement is supported by the response HCCL workers gave, employees with years experience between 0-5 have reported to be highly stressed followed by those with 6-10 years. This could be because the workers in this group are failing to cope with the work demands; they are failing to manage the pressure. However workers with higher years of experience (16-20 years) at HCCL have contradicted with Makasa (2013) for they have reported to be highly stressed. Vokic and Bogdanic (2007) postulates that Changes of technology also result in stress as some still find it difficult to progress with that advanced technology especially those that would have been working for the company for a long time . This was further clarified by the HR officer when he said that, *“job experience and occupational stress are being affected by advancement in technology, most of the workers especially the old madalas are struggling to catch up with the recent technologies which the company is introducing and this is resulting to poor production as we are failing to meet up with monthly targets”*. This results in occupational stress to both the employee and employer.



**Figure 4.3: Bar Graphs Showing Employee’s Perceived Levels of Occupational Stress and Job Experience**

From Figure 4.3 workers with only months to five years working for HCCL rated their level of stress as highly stressed. This is because these workers joined the company when it was already struggling and they are still trying to catch up with the rules and regulation of the company. They know that anything can happen and they will have problems in finding employment anywhere else due to little years of experience.

The two scholars that have been mentioned above are contradicting each other however, their line of arguments are applicable to HCCL situation. Therefore in order to establish any association between occupational stress and a workers job experience at HCCL, the Chi square test was administered. Two hypotheses were tested as stated below:

H<sub>0</sub> There is no association between occupational stress and job experience

H<sub>1</sub> There is an association between occupational stress and job experience

**Table4.3: Chi-Square Test of Level of Stress and Job Experience**

**Chi-Square Tests**

|                    | Value              | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|--------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 7.194 <sup>a</sup> | 6  | .303                  |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 8.777              | 6  | .186                  |
| N of Valid Cases   | 35                 |    |                       |

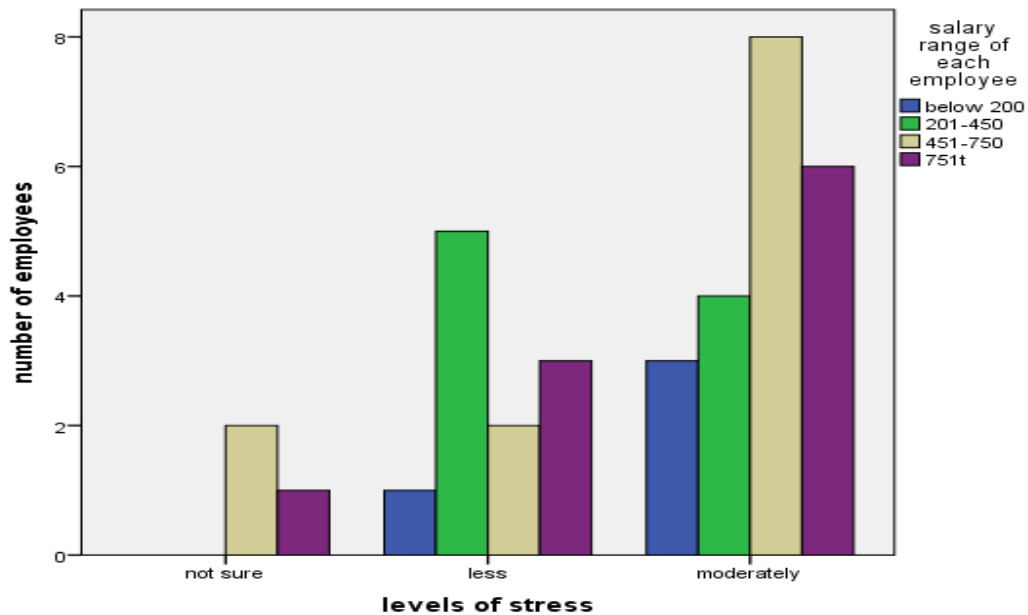
a. 9 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .26.

The Chi square value is shown in table and its 0.303. The figure is greater than 0.05 hence we reject  $H_1$  and accept  $H_0$  this means that there is no association between occupation stress and job experience. Any worker can be stressed no matter years of experience at HCCL.

The results that were found from the research contradicted with Katon (2003). Katon (2003) stated that there is a relationship between occupational stress and job experience , those who developed occupational were chronically ill or died at a significantly higher rate than men who remained well adjusted and free from occupational stress. When the correlation coefficients between stress and levels of experience are compared, individuals with greater experience exhibit lower levels of stress than those with fewer years of experience (Katon, 2003). The results might have differed with katon (2003) due to different stressors which the workers might be experiencing.

#### **4.8 Occupational Stress and Salary Range**

Salary range can affect stress levels of workers especially in workers with little salary range. (Michie, 2002) stated that, low income deprive employees from higher standard of living, good education, good health facilities, decent housing hence causing family dysfunctions and occupational stress. Makasa (2013) is also of the view that, employees that receive low income suffer from occupational stress when they compare their earnings in relation to the amount work they do. Low income employees also tend to live in isolation and exclusion from the rest of average employees as they fail to even to avoid decent housing



**Figure 4.3: Showing Salary Range and Level of Stress**

The workers who earn more are highly stressed than the workers who earn less. This could be because when workers know they earn less, they deal with it and therefore are prepared for anything. These are the kind of workers who are grateful that they have a job no matter how stressing it may be. Smith et al (2000) who found that the majority of workers in their study (90.8%) who were lowly stressed earned less. The SHEQ manager stated that, " *we are facing a challenge with employees who earn salaries more than 400 us dollars, this group is most affected with stress because they have not been receiving their salaries for more than 30 months hence failing to cope up with the current situation since they are used to a luxury life. Most of them have borrowed loans from banks and they are failing to pay back the loans. Low class employees are less affected with stress because they easily cope up with the situation and there hasn't been a great change in their social welfare.*"



#### 4.9 Perceived Levels of Occupational Stress and Job Insecurity

According to Michie, (2002) the prevailing economic environment can play a crucial role also on job security as it may affect the stability of the workers and the organization they are working for. The HR officer stated that, *“due to economic hardships the company is in a process of retrenching half of its employees. A number of employees who are reported to be stressed have increased since the beginning of the company’s restructuring and production levels have reduced because some workers are no longer coming to work as they are busy looking work incase they get fired.”* Colquitt et al (2011) asserted that during company restructuring it cause stress among employees because of the fear to lose their job. Company restructuring is hard on workers and reduced productivity is unavoidable due to stress. Job insecurity mainly affects workers without enough paper work because if they happen to loose their current job it will be difficult for them to find another job.

Chi square test was used to analyze the relationship between occupational stress and job insecurity. The following test was tested:

H<sub>0</sub>- there is no association between occupational stress and job insecurity

H<sub>1</sub>- there is an association between occupational stress and job insecurity

**Table 4.4: Chi-Square Test on Perceived Level of Occupational Stress and Job Insecurity**

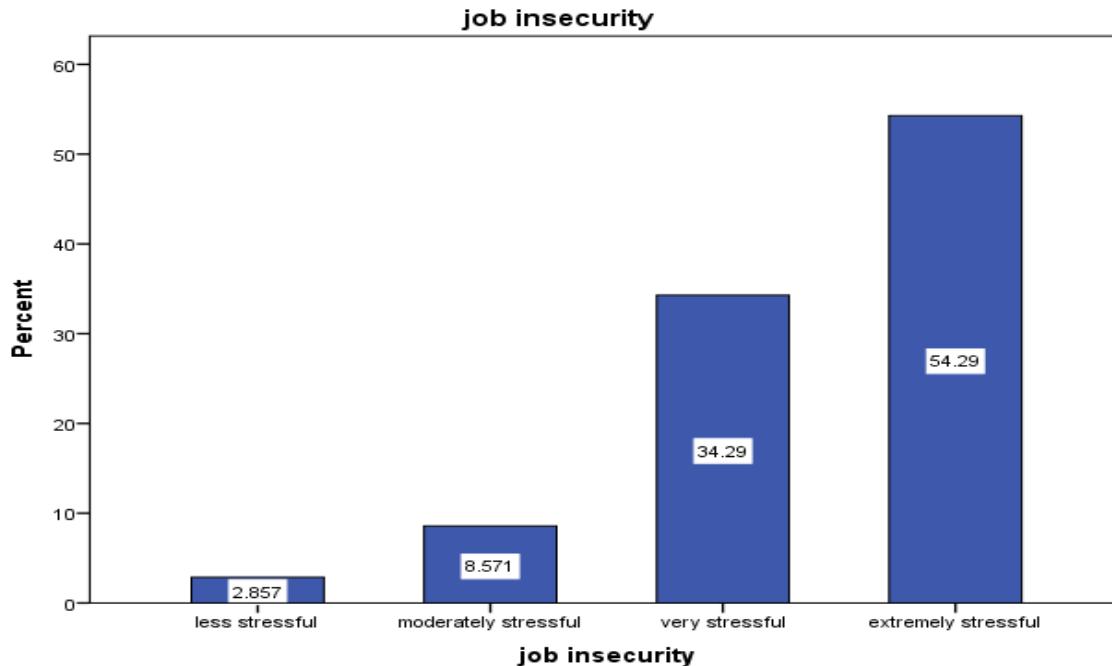
##### Chi-Square Tests

|                    | Value               | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 14.184 <sup>a</sup> | 6  | .028                  |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 14.401              | 6  | .025                  |
| N of Valid Cases   | 35                  |    |                       |

- a. 10 cells (83.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .23.
- b.

The results presented in table 4.4 show that the chi square value is 0.028, a figure below 0.05. Therefore we accept  $H_1$  and reject  $H_0$  thus meaning that there is strong association between perceived levels of stress and job insecurity. Job insecurity results into occupational stress at HCCL. Employees are having occupational stress emanating from fear of losing jobs and especially with the recent labor law interpretation which allows the employer to terminate an employee contract on three month notice without benefits. Research shows that from the period of MARCH 2016 up to date a total of 430 low level employees and 13 managers lost their jobs due to retrenchment in the organization and also one major contractor (MOTOR ANGILE) contracts were terminated.

The results shown in figure 4.4 shows that are 54.29 workers are extremely stressed du to job insecurity. SHEQ rep said," *Each time I see a messenger coming to me l get frightened of receiving my retrenchment latter because daily some one is supposed to be sent back home.* Therefor retrenchment program which is on going has triggered job insecurity within workers. From figure4.4, 34.29 % is very stressed due to job insecure8.571 and 2.857 are moderately and less stressed respectively. Those who are moderately and less stressed it is because some people have already been retrenched from their departments and also they have enough paper work hence looking for a new job wont be a hustle ,so they are prepared for anything as they have accepted the situation. They also feel that it's ok for them to leave the company since they have not been receiving their salaries.



**Figure 4.4: Bar Graphs Showing Perceived Levels of Stress and Job Insecurity**

#### **4.10 Occupational Stress and Promotion Prospects**

Ahmadi and Alireza (2007) postulates that job dissatisfaction was predicted by lack of career opportunities, poor promotion prospects, morale and lack of autonomy for outstanding work, together with some domestic stressors. Promotions are one of the factors that boost workers morale and employees tend to perform excellent work so as to get promoted. The HR officer noted that, " *One of the things we have failed to do as a company is to appreciate our employees for all the good work and outstanding work they do. Therefore employee performance has been demotivated and demoralized.*" From table 4.5 employees with poor promotion prospects are highly stressed, these employees feel that their hardworking effort is not being awarded any reward. . Gallant (2013) argues that when employees never get any rewards or recognition for their work, they quickly start to feel that no one cares. And if no one cares, why should they bother putting in the extra effort. Managers are often quick to dole out the criticism or correction when needed, but slow to dish out the praise. Employees are more engaged if their efforts are recognized and rewarded by the employer.

**Table 4.5: Showing Cross Tabulation of Promotion Prospects and Levels of Occupational Stress**

**Promotion prospects \* levels of stress Cross tabulation**

Count

|                     |                    | levels of stress |            |        | Total |
|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|--------|-------|
|                     |                    | less             | moderately | highly |       |
| Promotion prospects | High prospects     | 9                | 0          | 0      | 9     |
|                     | Moderate prospects | 6                | 4          | 0      | 10    |
|                     | Poor prospects     | 2                | 4          | 10     | 16    |
| Total               |                    | 17               | 8          | 10     | 35    |

To determine the existence of any association between occupational stress and poor promotion prospects the Chi square test was employed and the hypothesis were drafted as follows.

H<sub>0</sub>-there is no association between occupational stress and poor promotion prospects

H<sub>1</sub>- there is an association between occupational stress and poor promotion prospects.

**Table 4.6: Showing Chi-Square Test between Occupational Stress and Poor Promotion Prospects**

**Chi-Square Tests**

|                    | Value               | Df | Asymp. Sig.<br>(2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 12.534 <sup>a</sup> | 9  | .185                     |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 16.836              | 9  | .051                     |
| N of Valid Cases   | 35                  |    |                          |

a. 15 cells (93.8%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .71.

The results displayed in table 4.6 states that the Chi square value is 0.185 which is above 0.05 and this means that level of stress is not influenced by how workers are affected by poor promotion prospects we reject  $H_1$  and accept  $H_0$ . Any worker at HCCL can be stressed despite their level of promotion prospects.

#### 4.11 Gender and Problems with Supervisor

Work related stress also result to a negative impact of having conflicts and bullying at the workplace (Netterstrom, Olsen, Rugulies and Stansfeld, 2008). The conflicts are not only remaining between the employees themselves but also affecting the customers. *“Stressed employees render poor service which results in making the customers to shun to other organizations such as MAKOMO”, said the SHEQ manager*

**Table 4.7: Showing Cross Tabulation of Gender and Problems with Supervisor**

|                 | problems with the supervisor |         |       |                | Total |
|-----------------|------------------------------|---------|-------|----------------|-------|
|                 | Disagree                     | Neutral | agree | Strongly agree |       |
| gender of male  | 9                            | 9       | 2     | 1              | 21    |
| employee female | 0                            | 2       | 4     | 8              | 14    |
| Total           | 9                            | 11      | 6     | 9              | 35    |

The results in table 4.7 shows that females (8) strongly disagree, (4) agree, neutral (2), and (0) disagree. On the male side (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (9) neutral and (9) disagree. Therefore, the results shows that females are said to have problems with their bosses unlike males. This is because females they easily misinterpret things and are bound to have problems with their boss. According to Rampell (2015) all women are liars who will fabricate sexual harassment charges at the slightest provocation. Some middle-aged man mentioned that he never joins a female advisee for meals or drinks, at least not alone. Likewise, he said, *“any in-office meeting had to*

*be conducted with the door wide open*". To avoid such incidence a policy was formulated to protect both males and females that there should have a third person although the policy was in favor of males, some females viewed it as violating anti-discrimination.

On the other hand, Thompson (2008) also postulates that women who had only one female boss reported more psychological distress (such as trouble sleeping, difficulty focusing on work, depression and anxiety) and physical symptoms (such as headaches, stomach pain or heartburn, neck and back pain and tiredness) than women who worked for one male boss. Women who reported to a mixed-gender pair of supervisors also reported more of these symptoms than their peers who worked for a single male boss. Also men who worked for a single supervisor, regardless of the supervisor's gender, had similar levels of distress. Men who worked for a mixed-gender pair had fewer mental and physical symptoms than those working for a lone male supervisor. In an interview with the HR officer he stated that *most ladies prefer working with male bosses than female ones*. Therefore gender contributes to conflicts with the boss leading to high stress levels and reducing job performance at HCCL. Bickford (2005) is of the view that poor relationships with subordinates and superiors at work may cause job related stress. This is because of the uncertainty and fear which may result from such which compromises the worker to handle stressors. In that same manner, bullying, harassment and threats of violence may also result in work stress. HCCL situation is in support of this statement.

#### **4.12 Stress and Accident Occurring**

Occupational stress is reported to be interrelated, contributing to development of diseases and high accidents (Moustaka and Teodoros, 2010). Accident occurrence has been a nuisance at HCCL. For the year of 2017 the organization has already recorded more than 20 accidents and some of the accidents could have been avoided. These stressed employees are causing accidents due to mental disorders and lack of concentration which is resulting to the suing of the organization by NSSA (National Social Security Association) for it deals with the protection of the employees' welfare. Therefore the company ends up experiencing unnecessary expenses.

Table 4.8 shows that workers who have accidents weekly are highly stressed than other workers. Most workers experience accidents weekly and 14 employees are involved in accidents daily. The results show that HCCL work place is not safe since the rate of accident occurrence is high.

**Table 4.8: Showing Cross Tabulation Of Levels Of Occupational Stress And Accident Occurrence**

**rate of accident occurrence \* levels of stress Cross tabulation**

Count

|                             |         | levels of stress |          |        | Total |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------------|----------|--------|-------|
|                             |         | less             | moderate | highly |       |
| rate of accident occurrence | daily   | 0                | 5        | 9      | 14    |
|                             | weekly  | 1                | 6        | 11     | 18    |
|                             | monthly | 2                | 1        | 0      | 3     |
|                             | yearly  |                  |          |        |       |
| Total                       |         | 3                | 12       | 20     | 35    |

To determine the existence of any association between occupational stress and accident occurrence the Chi square test was employed and the hypothesis was drafted as follows.

H<sub>0</sub>-there is no association between occupational stress and accident occurrence

H<sub>1</sub>- there is an association between occupational stress and accident occurrence

The results displayed in table 4.9 states that the Chi square value is 0.004 which means there is strong association between occupational stress and accident occurrence. Therefore we reject  $H_0$  and accept  $H_1$ .

**Table 4.9: Showing Chi-Square Test between Occupational Stress and Accident Occurrence**

**Chi-Square Tests**

|                    | Value               | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 15.106 <sup>a</sup> | 4  | .004                  |
| Likelihood Ratio   | 10.949              | 4  | .027                  |
| N of Valid Cases   | 35                  |    |                       |

a. 6 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .26.

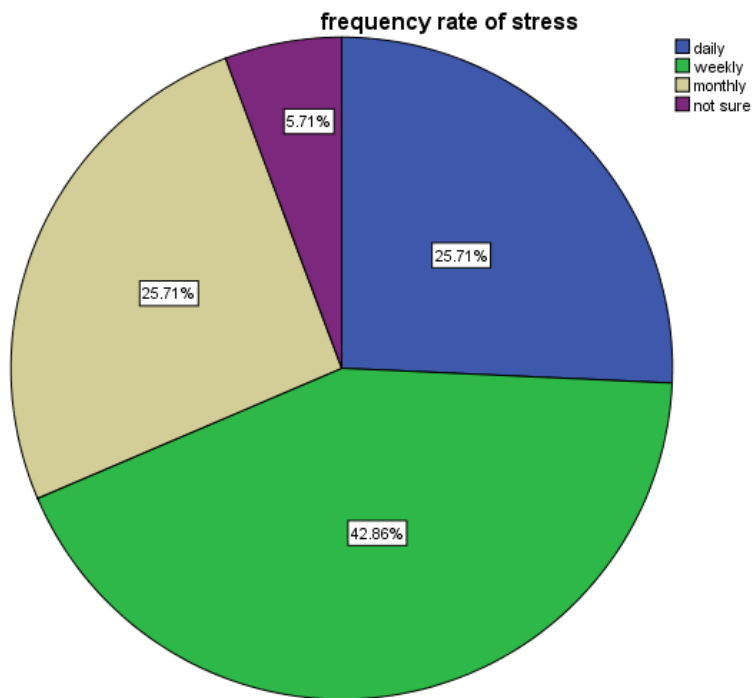
The results show that workplace accidents are caused by occupational stress within the organization. The organization will be highly working on its downfall as workplace accidents affects the organization’s brand name and if the accidents continues ,the organization performance can be disturbed through having investigations or even shutdown from NSSA (National Social Security Association) which caters for the safety of employees. Jacinto and Aspinwall (2009) argues that there is an implicit identification of accident scenarios as a combination of work in process, physical activity, deviation and agent of deviation. On the other hand Erven (2012) states that organizational and safety management are directly related in most scenarios through causes as lack of training, inadequate work methods and lack of appropriate preventive measures as personal protective equipment PPE and machines safeguards.

**4.13 PERCEIVED STRESS FREQUENCY BY WORKER**

In an aim to analyze severity of stress, the frequency of occupational stress was analyzed based on four options given in the questionnaire as shown in figure 4.5. From the results in figure 4.5 the majority of the workers were sometimes stressed in a week. They said this was because they have learnt to deal with stress though sometimes during the week they are just overwhelmed and cannot help it but stress at work. 25.71% of workers indicated that they are stressed on a daily



basis. They revealed that it was because they had to provide for food everyday and cope up with work demands every day. One plant operator stated that, “*the employer is unsympathetic and hence stress is inevitable on daily basis. The company claims that there is no money but the managers are still living a luxuries life. They expect us to work whilst we are hungry.*” Only 25.75% indicated that they are stressed on month ends. This was attributed to the pressure presented by unpaid bills such as maintenance, school fees, electrical bills and the anticipation which came from the delay of payments. Occupational stress at the HCCL is definitely something to be very serious about as most workers are affected by it. If problems are to go unsolved, the situation could develop into a calamity

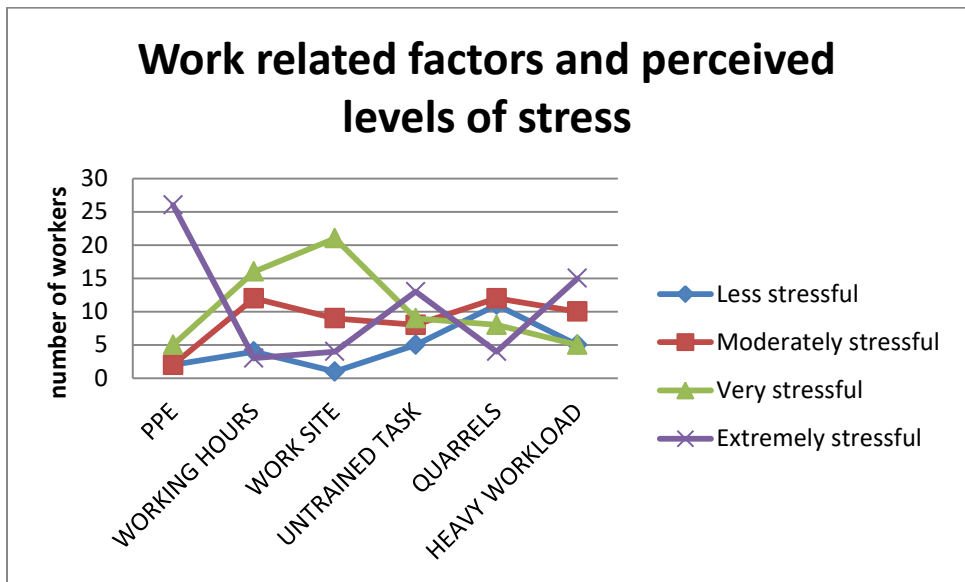


**Figure 4.5: Showing Perceived Occupational Stress Frequency by Workers**  
*Source: Field survey (2017)*

#### 4.14 Work Related Factors

Different scholars have found work related factors to be the major sources of occupational stress. In this research, Safety issues, working hours, work site, performing untrained task, quarrels and workload has been analyzed to asses the level of contribution to levels of occupational stress.

From Figure 4.6 the most highly rated aspect as extremely and very stressful is PPE. There is inadequate critical PPE to mention; Respirators, rain and safety shoes. The Organization is striving to provide the PPE, The last time employees were given PPE it was n 2015. The rate of provision is slow leading to loss in production as some employees cannot carry out their duties without PPE.



**Figure 4.6: Work Related Factors and Perceived Levels of Stress**

Figure 4.6 Indicates that 15 workers are very stressed due to long working. The research revealed that most workers who are stressed have a schedule of 12 hour shift which is in excess of the standard working time one is required to work. SHEQ manager stated that, "As a result long working hours lead to fatigue, but because they are afraid of losing their jobs they will not complain. It is an unhealthy shift and it affect them even mentally hence occupational stress will develop."

In figure 4.6 15 workers have reported to be extremely stressed due to excess workload. One plant operator indicated that, "the work we are required to cover and the given time frame to complete the task is unrealistic. Too much manual work and few workers carrying it out also cause stress in workers" Ackerfeldt and Malhotra (2013) argue that role conflict happens when job demand and expectations of employees are incompatible in terms of the set time frames and this concurs with this study finding. The HR officer revealed that, "the ongoing retrenchment

process intensified workload on the remaining employees hence paving way for occupational stress. Rubina et al,(2008) argue that work overload contributes to increase in stress amongst employees more than other factors.

According to Rebecca (2010) employees don't perform in a vacuum which means they work in an environment and has to be conducive. 20 workers at HCCL are very stressed due to the worksite. Employees strongly believe that the working environment was not conducive for them to perform their jobs efficiently and it's leading to occupational stress. During an observation, the working environment of HCCL is too dusty and dust suppression is not being done. Dust is a Safety and Health hazard which is of great concern in the mining area. SHEQ manager stated that," *according to studies respirable dust which of 5µm to 10µm consists of more than 50 mineral that are harmful to human health, to mention quartz, kaolinite, silica and pyrites. SIRDIC carried a dust audit at Chaba open cast pits with observed dust levels above the recommended. Hence, there is need to comprehensively monitor dust levels be for the health and safety of employees in the Plant. Moreso, there are challenges in the suppression of dust on the conveyer system, along the roads and walkways in the plant, which is a breach of SI 109 of 1990 Mining (Management and Safety) Regulations Section 71 subsection 1(a) which states that, when rock, ore, coal or other mineral or mineral compound is reduced in size, screened, moved, or handling or otherwise subjected to any process, which may produce dust harmful to persons. The workers are exposed to pneumoconiosis.*"

The health of HCCL workers is at stake as the company is exposing them to high levels of dust without any protection of dust mask. One miner indicated that," *the dust levels at our work place are too much, the company is no longer suppressing dust and we do not have adequate PPE such as dust mask. Now most of us are worried because we might get pneumoconiosis and TB. From the previous pneumoconiosis test two of our guys were moved from this section to the security section.*" Parkh et al (2004), postulates that working conditions should be conducive and favorable for the employees in order to bring out the best. This shows the environment should be conducive for the worker since a poor working environment can result in poor organizational performance.

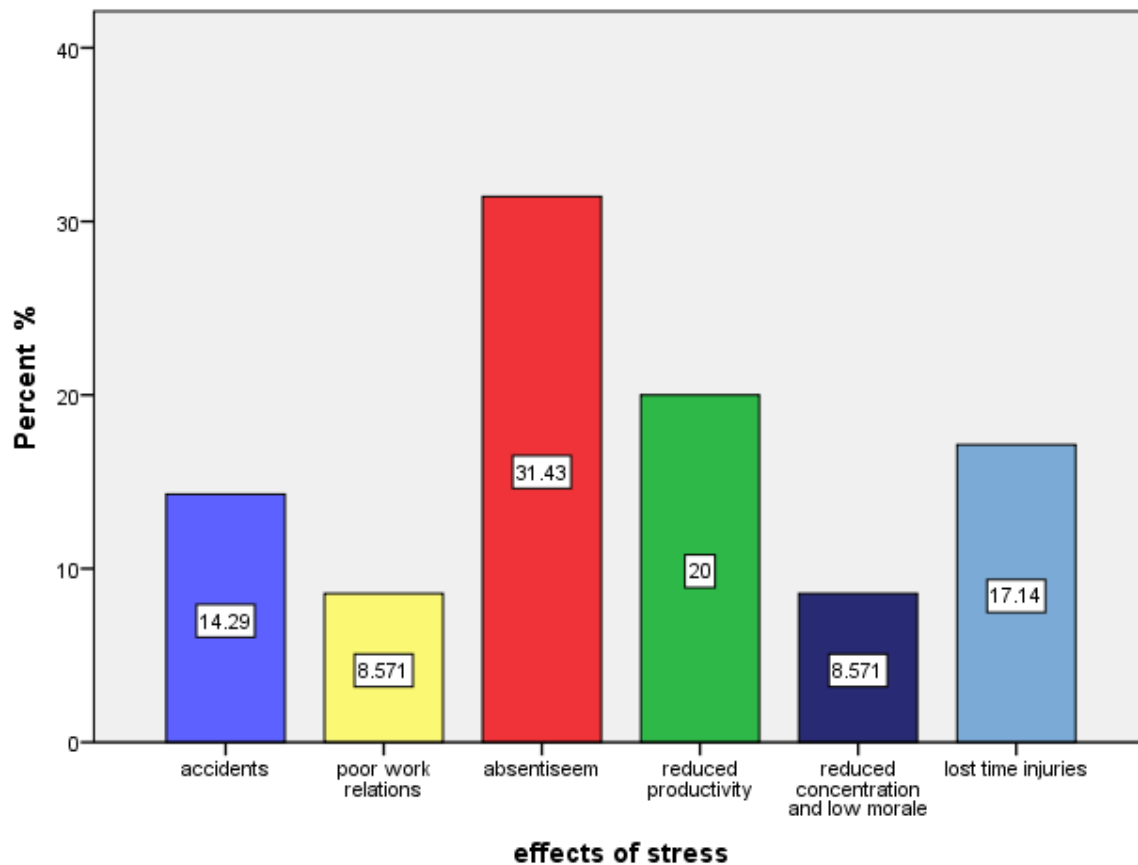


**Plate 4.1: High Dust Levels at the Crushing Station**

*Source: field survey (2017)*

#### **4.15 Impacts of Occupational Stress**

Occupational stress amongst employees adversely affects employee performance and on a larger scale company performance therefore there is need to manage and control it. Meneze. (2005) stated that occupational stress has become a challenge for the employer organizations as it results in low productivity, increased absenteeism and collection of other employee problems like alcoholism, drug abuse, hypertension and host of cardiovascular problems. The effects of stress shown in table below were highlighted by the workers of HCCL. The frequency rates of the effects were analyzed so as to come up with the major effects which are affecting the workers at HCC.



**Figure 4.7: Bar Graphs Showing Classified Effects of Occupational Stress**

*Source: field survey (2017)*

The research revealed that absenteeism rate is very high due to occupational stress. Figure 4.7 shows absenteeism statistics in detail, and 31.43% of the staff do not come to work for either one or two days due to stress. As most employees are not aware of occupational stress, it is only after one does investigative work to establish the actual reasons why employees are absent from work. Motowidlo and Van Scotter (2004) concur with these findings and goes on to say that occupational stress results in substantial cost to organizations through sickness, absenteeism, medical expenses and lost productivity. Occupational stress is the main reason workers don't show to work and someone is expected to cover up for them. This has an impact on the production because the available human labor won't be able to meet the target. Occupational stress affects organizational performance by reducing productivity and efficiency which affect

the organization negatively (Dua 1994 cited in Reskin, 2008). 20% of colliery workers believe that occupational stress has a negative impact on production. In an interview with the HR officer, he highlighted that *'it is difficult to deal with workers who have their thoughts elsewhere. Stress is a disease which is affecting performance because in the previous years, workers were often beating targets but now they perform poorly and work stress is the paramount cause. Since last year we have been failing to meet up with the target and that's the other reason for retrenchment because its useless to have lot of people who fail to meet up with the target goal'*

HCCL's production is largely determined by lost time injury frequency rate (LTIFR). Figure 4.7 illustrates that 17.14 of the respondents believed that occupational stress is responsible for LTIFR that occurs. The increase in lost hours due to injuries leads to a reduction in productivity and hence organization's performance will also dwindle. Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR) and Lost Time Injury Severity Rate (LTISR) are SHEQ performance indicators which determine whether workers are working safely or not. LSISR show the impact of an accident in terms of days lost per million man hours. Severe accident result in more days lost hence higher the Severity Rate. LSIFR is an indicator of how safe and healthy workplaces are. A workplace with a high LTIFR is unsafe. If workers suffer from occupational stress that means psychologically they are not in the right set of mind to work and this results in accidents as they are absent minded when carrying out their duties. According to Kelloway et al (2008) occupational stress has fast become a growing concern if undetected and necessary measures are not taken to assist the affected employee this usually results in increased accidents in the workplace which in the mining set up will reduce productivity and it turns away potential investors.

In figure 14.29% workers have highlighted that occupational stress is causing work accidents. Of all the job factors related to the causation of accidents only one emerged as a common denominator, high levels of stress at the time the accident occurred. A person under stress is an accident about to happen Ekundayo (2014). Most accidents occurrence at HCCL can be traced to occupational stress as revealed in the questionnaires by the respondents. Workers underperform, make mistakes and are careless in their routine work behavior when they are experiencing stress. Accident is both disruptive and costly to the organization as they result personal injury and property damage, hence the company incur unplanned expenses. When a person is stressed they

tend to loose concentration. Reduced concentration also leads to unsafe acts which if unfortunate will end up leading work accidents. 3 workers have reported to loose concentration when they are stressed.

Figure 4.7 shows that there are poor industrial relations though to a marginal extent (8.571%). According to Kelloway (2008) work poor climate can be noted by increase in staff grievances, collective job action and increased in disciplinary hearings. If there are problems that require the two parties to sit and solve this will take a lot of time as each end would want to prove their worth to each other, as a result this can slow down organization efficiency.

When workers are stressed they tend to be slow in what ever they are doing thus they wont be able to cover up required work on the specified time frame. In figure 4.7 8.571 employees have indicated that occupational stress affects their concentration and personal morale. Where there is low morale employees are generally not happy of their jobs and work place environment. This attributes to high levels of occupational stress hence ones concentration is affected as they will be thinking of other strategies. The worker will be at work physically but mentally he/she is absent. In an interview the SHEQ manager stated that, " employees are forced to suppress their problems and work resulting in low morale which leads to occupational stress.

#### **4.16 Coping Strategies**

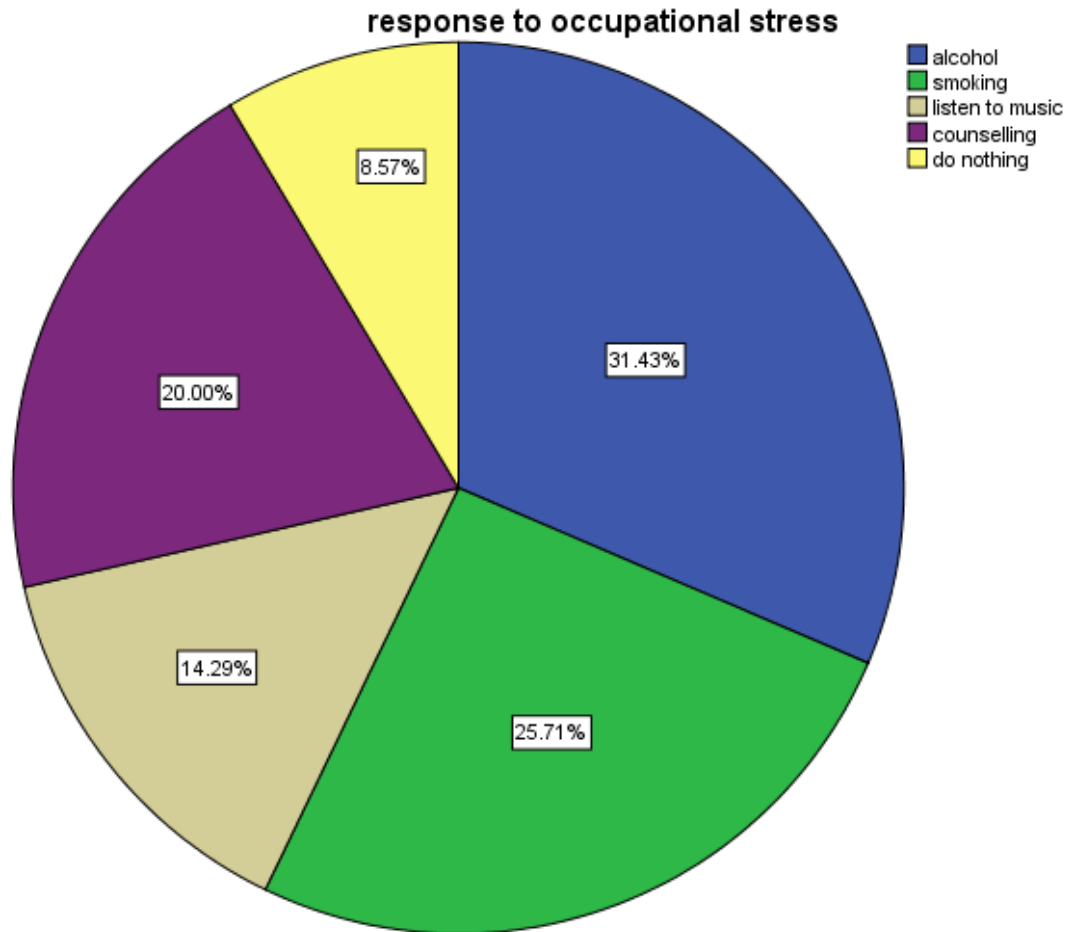
To enable detailed investigation the coping strategies were categorized into personal and institutional coping mechanisms. Personal coping strategies are the strategies employed by a worker as an individual to deal with occupational stress and institutional strategies are those strategies employed by HCCL as a company to deal with occupational stress. It forms the organization's culture and traditions of helping its workers to reduce and minimize the sources and severity of occupational stress.

#### 4.16.1. Personal Coping Strategies

Personal coping mechanisms can be either negative or positive. Negative mechanisms are those methods used by workers to cope with work stress which are destructive and harmful to health and wellness of the worker and may destruct the worker from performing expected duties. Positive coping strategies are those mechanisms employed by workers which are beneficial to the worker in the present as well as the long term basis and these may boost the workers performance. When Sears (2000) examined occupational stress and coping strategies among health workers, he found out that most of his participants used negative coping strategies such as excessive alcohol intake and drug or substance abuse, alcohol reduce workers vision and accuracy and accidents are bound to happen.

From Figure 4.8, it can be noted that majority of the workers (31.43%) generally respond to work stress by going to taking in alcohol. This is a negative coping strategy. The workers either come to work drunk or they bring their alcohol to work and drink it during working hours. In an interview the SHEQ manager stated that, " *mostly the workers are coming to work drunk, the company does not allow workers to be under the influence of alcohol during working hours but us as the SHEQ section we have failed to control the situation since the company does not have any working breathalyzer. Hence it difficult for us to tell if one is drunk or not, however we have resorted into checking workers behavior during working hours. These workers believe if they take alcohol they will forget all their problems for that period. The rate of accident occurrence has increased due to alcohol intake.*" However, 25.71% of the workers relieve their stress by smoking to ease up their stress, and 20% of the workers go for counseling.





**Figure 4.8: Personal Coping Strategy to Occupational Stress**

Counseling is a positive coping strategy and workers are bound to find solution to their problems. At HCCL there is a counseling section which deals with counseling employees. In an interview with the nurse in charge she said, " *in the previous years workers were shy to come for counseling, however, due to seminars we have been conducting there is now an improvement in the number of workers who come for counseling. A problem shared is half solved, we have realized that some of the things thus stressing our workers are petty issues hence we give them some alternative solution.* The SHEQ manger said, " *here at HCCL we believe that counseling involves two things. Its either one has to go through formal counseling or workers can discuss issues during their leisure time. We found out that some workers are not comfortable with discussing their issues with people they don't know. Therefore discussing helps the worker as an*

*individual to feel that s/he is not alone and in many a times, some workers realize they have better burdens than others thus they are motivated to be strong and fight off the effects of stress.* Figure 4.8 shows that 11.43% of the workers listen to music so as to ease up their stress. The remaining 11.43 of the workers do nothing to respond to work stress. These are negative coping mechanisms as in the long run workers are likely to suffer from adverse health impacts such as lung cancer and liver problems.

#### 4.16.2 Institutional Coping Strategies

HCCL has established a section which is responsible for counseling, by the time the research was under taken the section had been established few months back. However there are no counseling professionals hence for the mean time the nurses are the ones responsible for counseling. The researcher observed that even in the SHEQ policy of the company occupational stress issues were not specifically mentioned. To give more detail the SHEQ manager was interviewed ,he said that,” *after realizing that occupational stress is becoming an issue in the company and the works performance is affected negatively we approached the medical department to formulate an section which deals with counseling. However, I believe even though we do not have any documented coping strategies for occupational stress the company has been trying to manage stress indirectly. We have clubs which these workers can join so as to relax the mind. We also participate in first aid competitions, marathon competitions and ball games competitions with other mining companies; this has been helping in refreshing the mind of our workers.* The HR officer also highlighted that,” *We do not deny our workers days off when they feel overwhelmed by work., these workers get leave days of up to three months and when they come back they will be fresh and ready to work .we have also introduced commemoration days such as the Kamandama day and Colliery day, the workers don't go to work but they will be celebrating and food will be provided.*” The company has a human check list which the workers believe its one of the strategies which the company has put in place. In an interview one dump truck driver said that,” *when we got employed here at HCCL we were taught about the human check list and that's how the SHEQ department have been managing stress issues.*

#### **HUMAN CHECK LIST**

*I-ILLINESS*

*M-MEDICATION*

*S-TRESS*

*A-LCOHOL*

*F-ATIGUE*

*E-EATING*

*So if you are suffering from any one of the above mentioned you tell your SHEQ rep and the SHEQ rep tells your immediate supervisor, he/she then will look for ways to handle your situation. However the human check list is not fully practiced because sometimes the supervisor thinks that people will be lying hence we are forced to work when stressed”*

HCCL is yet to come up with coping strategies because the organizational coping strategies are weak although the SHEQ section and HR department are willing to come up with strategies and include them in the SHEQ policy. There is no proper drafted plan of action which addresses all the issues of occupational stress.

#### **4.17 Occupational Stress and the Legal Frameworks**

Hwange Colliery Company Limited in Zimbabwe is required by law to follow certain Occupational Health and Safety Legislation throughout its entire operations. Throughout the interviews and field observations, it was noted that the company is aware of some of the legislation governing OHS for instance their commitment to the Factories and Works Act (14:08), Statutory Instrument 68 of 1990 and others. The company is required by law to establish a SHEQ policy in Figure 4.9

As noted below in figure 4.9 the company policy does not clearly state the issue of occupational stress. In an interview it was brought to light that the policy did not cover occupational stress issues because it wasn't an issue to be concerned about back then but however they are willing to include occupational stress in their new SHEQ policy which they are drafting and also the policy was drafted as per NSSA requirements and that they are supposed to state five or six things as required by NSSA as a result ergonomics is enshrined in other issues on the policy.

The company is complying with the EMS 14001:2004, OHSAS 18001:2007 and the Zimbabwe Occupational Safety Health Policy of 2014. Training needs have been identified and relevant programs drawn up to improve competence levels of employees in contributing to improved safety, health and environmental performance. These include, on-the-job training, safety talks, competence based training and induction training. More so, the Departments within the sends its trainees' to Training Centre, to attend various courses, to mention Supervisory Skills, Time Management, Culture Change and a number of Behavior change courses, which the student greatly appreciated.



## HWANGE COLLIERY COMPANY LIMITED

HWANGE

Title: S.H.E.POLICY

Page 1 of 1

Revision N<sup>o</sup>: 3

Record N<sup>o</sup>: SHER. 1.01

Issue Date : 27 February 2015

HWANGE Colliery Company Limited, recognising that its core activities of exploration, coal mining and processing inherently impact on the Safety and Health of its workers and the Environment and Community, in which it operates, undertakes to:

1. Create a culture in which **all forms of loss** are eliminated.
2. Develop, implement and maintain an auditable Safety, Health and Environmental Management System that is consistent with the nature and conditions of its operations, within the framework of preventive action and continual improvement.
3. Identify, monitor and control Safety, Health, Environmental, Security and Business Risks arising from operations.
4. Operate in compliance with applicable current local Safety, Health and Environmental Legislation and Regulations and relevant International Standards.
5. Establish and review Safety, Health and Environmental objectives, targets and programmes with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and provide resources for their achievement.
6. Reduce risks and impacts associated with fall of ground, transportation; moving machinery, noise, fugitive dust, oils and acid mine drainage from our operations.
7. Encourage employees, business partners and other stakeholders to assume a responsible attitude regarding changing circumstances on Environmental, Occupational Health and Safety issues through dissemination of information, and appropriate education, training, communication and supervision to maximise individual awareness and contribution.
8. Ensure all employees observe S.H.E. Standards in their areas of operation.
9. **Ensure Line management is responsible** for enforcing S.H.E standards in their areas of operation.

The Company commits itself to implementing this policy. Compliance is the responsibility of all individual managers, employees and contractors so as to protect our **Business Image**.

This policy, copies of which will be made available to all interested parties, will be reviewed and revised as, and when the need arises to ensure its continued relevance, adequacy and suitability in the light of changing circumstances and to reflect the company's growing understanding of Safety, Health and Environmental issues.







|   |   |
|---|---|
| Managing Director<br>Signed:                 | Chairman: Main SHE Committee<br>Signed:              |
| Chairman: Workers Committee(NEC)<br>Signed:  | Chairman: Workers Committee (Management)<br>Signed:  |
| Chairman: AMWUZ<br>Signed:                   | Chairman: NUMQISWZ<br>Signed:                        |

Figure 4.9: Hwange Colliery Company Limited SHEQ policy

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Conclusion**

The research findings revealed the levels and dimensions of occupational stress and its relationship with employee performance particularly in the mining sector. The results of this study support this notion that there is an inverse relationship between occupational stress and employee performance meaning that high level of occupational stress influences employee performance in a negative way.

Findings from the study revealed that the causes of stress amongst employees were lack of adequate lack of job security, PPE, long working hours, poor work site, family problems and work overload. Fiabane, (2012) argues that stress is the inadequate coping with work environment which lead to negative consequences on worker's physical and psychological health, due to negative emotions and on the other hand, work overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, and responsibility for people, participation and lack of feedback results in increasing stress levels. Stress at HCCL is mainly caused by job insecurity, poor promotion prospects conflicts at work, lack of PPE and home pressure. It became evident that every worker at HCCL is vulnerable to occupational stress despite his or her job experience, age, academic qualifications, home pressure, job insecurity and or poor promotion prospects.

Furthermore, the impacts of high levels of stress were quite varied. Results in figure 4.6 shows that high levels of stress led to negative relations with workmates, reduced concentration and low morale, absenteeism at work, work accidents due to unsafe acts, increased lost time injuries and reduced productivity. Vandijk (2010) postulates that adverse consequences of depression on work can be indexed by different work outcome measures, such as presenteeism, productivity loss, decrease in work quality, mistakes and errors, work accidents, sickness absence, disability pensions and unfavourable career perspectives. Work related stress leads to physical and mental

disorder due to the imbalance of work and rewards therefore stress greatly reduces quality of work and this will affect the organization performance. From the findings employee engagement can be achieved through conducting trainings, fair performance appraisals and promotions. This increase job performance as employees feels that their input is being considered.

## 5.2 Recommendations

To enable the organization to improve and maintain high performance standards by reducing occupational stress, the researcher recommends the following:

### 5.2.1 Recommendations to the Company

- The company should implement management measures that focus on eradication of occupational stress, as it is far more rewarding to be proactive than treating manifested health damage and deal with the impacts if occupational stress. For example providing food hampers and giving cash advance to the employees. Biron (2012) concurs and asserts that the negative costs associated with reducing performance, absenteeism, sickness and turnover are substantially higher compared to the costs of keeping employees present, well and healthy by implementing stress management interventions.
- Hwange Colliery Company Limited should reward hardworking and exceptional employees. This can eliminate occupational stress amongst employees as it shows recognition of employees` effort by the employer whilst stimulating commitment from employees. It will also build employee satisfaction which eventually reduces occupational stress in employees. The recognition and awarding of outstanding contribution by employees keeps them highly motivated.
- Design jobs to provide meaning, stimulation (less monotony) and opportunities for employees to use their skills. Giving employees more challenging tasks to perform which make work more interesting, compared in doing one job over and over again being work boring.

- The managers should give employees the opportunity to participate in the decision making process. This allows employees to express their feelings about their different tasks, how they can carry out their tasks. Moreover, it gives them the opportunity to say how they feel about the organization. In doing so employees feel part of the organization and valued by their superiors
- Management should improve the working relations and communication between employees and their superiors or even top management as this allows employees to freely air out their grievances or issues which if suppressed might lead to occupational or give room for such conditions that lead to occupational stress.
- The organization should also focus on provision of recreational facilities, stress management training and development programs so as to improve employee welfare at the same time reducing occupational stress. This distracts workers from their mundane work lives and reduces susceptibility to occupational stress related diseases and any other illnesses.
- The human resources department should introduce Employee Assistance program to increase social support to workers. Such a program could allow workers to reduce home pressure as the program will aid workers to support their dependents with expenses like school fees and medical aid when there are payment delays. The program could also help workers who are tenants to buy residential stands and develop them thus reducing stress
- Safety Health Environment and Quality section should come up with a logical, properly drafted stress management strategy and also include it in the SHEQ policy of the company. This will cover the institutional loop holes in managing job stress.
- The medical services department needs to employ trained psychology counselors and open counseling section within departments.



- Establish work schedules that are compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the job. The company can increase number of shifts such that workers won't have long working hours. This gives workers enough time and family matters as well as their work.
- HCCL needs to provide adequate PPE to reduce the impact of hazards such as inhalation of dust. Also there is need for dust suppression. This reduces safety worries in workers which may reduce the rate of occupational stress.

### 5.2.2 Recommendations to the Employees

- Employees should come up with their work social groups through the assistance of their workers representatives. Through these groups they can engage organizations that educate them on employee health and they will discuss topics such as to do with occupational stress.
- Employees should also regularly visit the hospital for regular health checkup. This will ensure that their health is in check and the health personnel can be able to pick occupational stress signs and symptoms at their infancy stage, thereby allowing prompt action to be taken by both the employee and the organization.
- Employees should look for someone they trust to discuss their problems with because a problem shared is half solved. So that they can also get some help and advice from their core workers.
- Employees are also recommended to come up with other sources of money such as starting up a project, so that they won't rely on the salary only.
- Workers need to empower themselves by improving their academic qualification so as they are marketable.

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