

Towards zero harm discourse: denaturing the safety performance plateau in underground mining

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Abstract

The research developed a sustainable zero harm discourse framework for denaturing the safety performance plateau in Underground mining at How Mine. A mixed method research design, triangulating qualitative and quantitative data collection methods from employees and purposively sampled key informants who included the SHEQ manager, underground manager and the mine captain was used. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The main causes of accidents were environmental factors and machinery. The implemented strategies and procedures for accident prevention included inspections, internal audits, training, Visible Felt Leadership (VFL) and behavior-based safety (BBS) among others. Failure of existing strategies was linked to inadequate scope or room for workers and other stakeholders to make an input towards these existing strategies. A zero harm discourse framework was developed to assist in denaturing the safety plateau that is currently being experienced. The framework which emphasizes on broad based participation and incorporation of the sustainability concept is important as it can assist safety managers and management in completely eliminating harm and possible fatalities in the workplace.

Keywords: Zero harm, Behavior based safety, Accident prevention, Workplace safety