



Public Sector Stressors and Coping Mechanisms in South Africa: A Comparative Psychological Study

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Abstract

Public sector workers in South Africa are exposed to unique stressors such as budget constraints, political instability, and accountability pressures. A mixed-methods approach involving surveys and in-depth interviews was employed to gather data from 500 public sector workers across various departments. Public sector employees reported significantly higher levels of job-related stress compared to private sector colleagues, with themes including financial insecurity and political interference impacting their well-being. The study underscores the need for comprehensive support programmes in the public sector that address both individual and organisational factors contributing to stress. Implementing employee assistance programmes and promoting work-life balance strategies can mitigate adverse mental health effects among public sector staff. Public Sector, Stressors, Coping Mechanisms, Occupational Psychology, South Africa

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, apartheid, quantitative, qualitative, resilience, vicarious trauma, bureaucratic*

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