

https://dspace.org/

Military psychologists' perspectives on managing intimate partner violence in the military context

Matsemela, Plantinah Raisebe

2023-06

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

https://hdl.handle.net/10539/40028

Matsemela, Plantinah Raisebe. (2023). Military psychologists' perspectives on managing intimate partner violence in the military context. [Master's dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg]. WIReDSpace. https://hdl.handle.net/10539/40028

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Abstract

The South African military is an institution with a high prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV). The present study investigated military psychologists' perspectives on managing IPV in the military context. The study aimed to understand how military psychologists understand and work with victims of IPV, as well as to gain insight into the challenges in working with this population. Utilising a sample of six clinical and counselling military psychologists, the study undertook a qualitative research design, employing semi-structured interviews as a data collection method. Data were analysed using the six steps of Braun and Clarke's thematic data analysis, which included an inductive identification of themes and patterns across the data. Four main themes with their sub-themes were identified. Theme 1 identified features of IPV, including definitions and dimensions; Theme 2 discussed causes of IPV unique to a military context; Theme 3 focused on therapeutic challenges involved in treating victims of IPV; and the final Theme 4 included recommendations for managing the treatment of IPV in the military context. Key findings were that culture and rank are structures inherent to the military context; that IPV is not gender-based but related to power dynamics; and that the structures enforcing seniority in the military can be a contributing factor to the nature and presence of IPV in this context. The military context has structures in place for daily operations. While these structures are put in place to sustain and create order in the organisation, they attract and maintain issues such as IPV, which result in mental health issues.