

THE IMPACT OF SHIFT WORK ON THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF CAMPUS SECURITY GUARDS

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ABSTRACT

The health and wellbeing of campus security guards continues to be ignored in academia particularly by the researchers and by those who employ these guards. The main aim of the study was to gain a clearer understanding of the impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of campus security guards. The evidence from the study clarifies what many other researchers' have revealed about the negative impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of employees. However, more specifically, the study revealed five issues around how shift work has an impact on the health and wellbeing of campus security guards. These issues were deduced through the application of semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis. The study showed that shift work has an impact on a number of underlying factors such as disrupted family lives and religious gatherings; limited control leading to stress; working conditions' impact on health; and disturbed sleeping patterns. All of these had a role in decreasing employees' job performance and ultimately impacting on the organisation's effectiveness. Apart from regulation, the study calls on government to be more involved in the health and wellbeing of the South African workforce, especially security guards. The study makes a number of suggestions to that effect.

Keywords: Health-related issues; Job-Demand Control theory; private security; social and home life interference; Spill-over theory.



INTRODUCTION

Work has a great influence on the health and psychological wellbeing of employees, regardless of the type of job or position (Kirsh & Gewurtz, 2012). According to the World Health Organisation, health refers to “the state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing” (Harvey, 2013, p.2). Wellbeing incorporates factors such as emotional stability, clear thinking, the ability to love, create, embrace change, exercise intuition and experience continuing sense of spirituality” (Harvey, 2013, p 2-3). Needless to say there are a variety of underlying factors that may contribute to employees’ diminishing health and unstable psychological wellbeing (Kirsh & Gewurtz, 2012). These factors could range from role ambiguity/conflict, working environments, work schedules, leadership styles, communication levels, involvement within an organisation, support systems and a variety of different instigators (Kirsh & Gewurtz, 2012). Problematically, when factors such as these impact the health and wellbeing of an employee it not only has a negative impact on the employees themselves, but also results in poor job performance and organisational effectiveness. Employees are organisations’ most valuable resource; therefore, there is a greater need to be aware of various health and well-being issues experienced by employees.

Issues of health and wellbeing have become increasingly important with regards to shift work and the job of security guards, as both categories are extremely demanding in nature. Therefore, the researcher of this paper aimed to explore the health and wellbeing issues that campus security guards experience due to shift work.

The growth of the private security industry is not unique to South Africa. South Africa’s unique historical past has had its own impact on this rapid increase of the private security industry (Shaw, 2002). The reason for this increase has been seen as a result of the deterioration of the apartheid regime and the increase of insecurity concerning safety of South African citizens (Shaw, 2002). This deterioration has resulted in the rise of more than 9000 registered private security companies, subsequently making South Africa the country with the largest private security sector in the world (Labour Research Services, 2014). This increase undoubtedly has its advantages, one of which is the increase in job opportunities for many South African citizens (Shaw, 2002). Consequently, this rapid growth in the private security industry may have had an overall impact on the job requirements and demands faced by security guards.

A report published by the Private Security Industry Regulatory Authority (2015) illustrates the neglect of the health and wellbeing of the security guards in the Southern African region. The annual report of 2013/14 showed that more than one million security officers were registered in South Africa with a staggering 487,058 of these officers classified as active, meaning employed and working as security guards (Gichanga, 2015). In light of the dramatic increase in the private security industry, international research has shown the negative impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of employees (Costa, 1996; De Boer, Bakker, Presser, 1986; Fenwick & Tausig, 2001; Sparks, Faragher & Cooper, 2010; Syroit & Schoufeli, 2002). In South Africa, there

appears to be little research with regard to the impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of employees, especially on security guards. Therefore, with a large population of registered security guards in South Africa, it is important to understand the potential threats that may affect security guards.

The nature of security work is largely dependent on the functions which an employee is expected to fulfil. However, the prevention of crime is a common responsibility across security work (Jahi, 2011). The job requirement of security guards falls essentially on their ability to operate around the clock; however, it is separated by the use of shifts. During security guards' shifts, they are required to meet the demands set by both the employer and their clients (Dempsey, 2011). Therefore, the controlling of crime, monitoring alarm systems, conducting building lock-up and ensuring personal safety are just a few occupational duties required of security guards (Dempsey, 2011).

One aspect of the nature of security guards' work is embedded in systems of rotated shifts (i.e. changing periodically from days to nights) depending on the category (A or B) of the security guard, organisation and client demands (Department of Labour, 2012; Dempsey, 2011). According to the South African Department of Labour (2012), a security officer categorised as A, is subject to a maximum of 48 hours a week of work, however not exceeding shifts of 12 hours. Category B security officers are subjected to a maximum of 50 hours weekly, not exceeding shifts of 12 hours.

This being said, reoccurring crimes such as property theft, vehicle theft, robbery, vandalism and physical assault are issues that arise on tertiary campuses across South Africa (Rodriguez, Krammer & Scherriff, 2013). This identifies a number of dangerous situations which security guards are expected to prevent as well as to deal with. One can see that there are several potential risks that security guards are exposed to, however little research has highlighted how the nature of security work (including the dangerous nature and shift work) may have an impact on the health and wellbeing of those involved. This confirms the importance of this particular qualitative study, as the personal experiences will expose issues associated with security work.

In this study, focus was placed on a diversity of issues that jeopardise employees' health and wellbeing. The Job-demand control theory as well as the Spill over theory was employed to explore these health and wellbeing related issues.

The Spill-over theory focuses on the interaction and effects that one domain, either home or work, has on the other (Polifko-Harris, 2010). For example, if an employee experiences fatigue due to his/her work, this may be manifested at home in the employee's inability to fulfil expected family roles (Lingard & Francis, 2009). This spill-over may occur in a reverse manner as well, whereby positive moods in one area may cause positive moods in another (Lingard & Francis, 2009). Therefore, spill-over is an indirect relationship between work and family domains, which may result in both positive and negative situations to occur as they tend to have a ripple affect (Lingard & Francis, 2009). As previously mentioned, the interaction can have both positive

and negative effects. A negative effect of Spill-over is ‘carryover stress’, this is when “one area interferes and places demands on the other area, which may not be able to accommodate the added strain” (Polifko-Harris, 2010, p. 519). These carryover stresses may be social, emotional or even physical, which could lead to a variety of problems (Polifko-Harris, 2010).

Job control is considered to be the combination of self-sufficiency within a job role and the choice to use different skills within a job role (Landy & Conte, 2010). Karasek (1979) suggested that each combination between levels of job demand and level of job control has their own effect on employees (Cox & Griffiths, 2010). ‘High strain’ jobs are classified as having low control but high demands, seen in assembly line workers, nurses, waitrons (Landy & Conte, 2010), all of whom generally have shift work embedded in the nature of their job. In contrast, ‘low strain’ or ‘passive’ jobs are seen to be categorised by having both low job control and low job demands; which is evident in jobs such as those of janitors and night watch guards (Landy & Conte, 2010).

The term Spill-over, according to Lingard & Francis (2009, p. 118) refers to “a situation in which the interaction between work and family causes moods, values, or behaviours displayed in one domain to be similar to those displayed” in another. This paper is divided into four distinct sections: literature review, methodology, data analysis and concluding remarks and recommendations.

The reason for the relevance of these theories is that they have permeated throughout previously covered empirical studies about shift work and security guards. Karasek’s (1979) Job Demand Control theory and the Spill-over theory have both formed the foundation of this research, as the effects of shift work have proven to have a negative effect on employee’s social and family life, and both these factors that contribute to an individual’s health and wellbeing, as previously stated. This may be evident in security guards as their lack of control over their working environment together with high job demands, could lead to high levels of stress which would be carried from the work environment to the home environment and vice versa. This is supported by Fenwick & Tausig (2001), who revealed that working nonstandard working hours increased work-family conflict and reduced overall marital and family satisfaction. These two theories coincide and complement one another with regards to security guards. This may be referred to as issues associated with job demand control theory, in terms of how little job control and high work demands may cause carryover stress to occur and other negative health-related issues which may be carried over into the employee’s home life (Spill-over theory).

The application of these theories in the examination of security guards’ experience of shift work provides the researchers with insight to issues that need to be taken into consideration by both the organisations involved. Issues around lack of control could arise as employees are restricted by the demands of the organisation and the clients. Thus, with the combination of high demands and low control, security guards may experience levels of frustration and stress with potential to spill over into their family

lives. That being said, on the other hand the irregularity of shift work hours may cause issues of employees to be detached from family duties, which could result in family issues (spilling over into the work domain). Therefore, the use of such theories has allowed for a wide range of issues to arise, especially when dealing with the impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of those involved. This has exposed the importance of health and wellbeing of all employees.

RESEARCH AIMS

The main focus of this study was to gain a clearer understanding of the impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of campus security guards at one of the Eastern Cape's institutions of higher learning.

In order to gain a detailed understanding of the above aim, a number of issues were explored. These included:

1. Health-related issues such as disrupted sleep patterns or fatigue that may have resulted in having a spill over effect onto employees' job performance and home life.
2. The lack of control, long working hours and dangerous nature of security guards' jobs that may have caused work-related stress.
3. The possible spill over effect of work-related stress onto employee's home life and social relations.
4. Contextual factors that may have a role in the experience of shift work by the individuals.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study utilised a qualitative research design aimed at understanding the participants' experiences, interactions and constructions from within the phenomenon itself rather than from the outside (Kvale, 2007; Willig, 2013).

Sample

The project employed purposive sampling as it serves best for the interests and aims of the research. Purposive sampling is "a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher's judgement about which one will be the most useful or representative" (Babbie, 2009, p. 207). Thus it enabled the selection of participants based on features and characteristics of interest (Silverman, 2013). A benefit of purposive sampling is that it enables the use of snowballing sampling, when an issue of lack of participation arises.

The criteria for inclusion are set out below.

- Participants had to be campus security guards at an institution of higher learning.
- Participants had to be subcontracted from a campus security company.
- Participants had to be over the age of 18 years old.
- Participants had to perform some form of shift work (i.e., 8 or 12 hour shifts).

A total of five participants were interviewed. The five participants were all employees of a well-known private security company in the Eastern Cape; which dominates the private security industry in the area. The participants were subcontracted to an institution of higher learning which is an internationally recognised university that makes use of security guards throughout the year for property and resource protection.

Data Collection and Analysis

The data collection technique embraced by this research project was semi-structured interviews. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999), qualitative researchers tend to utilise interviews and observations in order to effectively understand a phenomenon. Semi-structured interviews are conducted around a set of core questions; however, there should be flexibility for both the researcher and the participant to expand on questions more freely (Mitchell & Jolley, 2010). This assisted the project as the researcher was able to ask further questions about the participants' experience of shift work; questions that were not a part of the original four. The development of these questions were influenced and guided through various literatures around shift work and its impact on employees' health and well-being.

It is important to acknowledge that due to language barriers between the researcher (English) and the participants (isiXhosa), an interpreter was utilised for the purposes of this research project. During the interviews participants tended to switch between speaking in English and isiXhosa. The use of the interpreter provided the participants with comfort as when unable to articulate themselves in English, they relied on the interpreter to express themselves. The interviews were conducted in a space of one and a half months, due to lack of participation. The time lapse of each interview varied from 15 minutes to 35 minutes; this was a result of time constraints of participants.

The interviews were conducted during the security guards' lunch break which only lasted about an hour, during which the security guards were required to eat, and have a bathroom break, as well as travel to their next point of reference (which on a number of occasions was situated on the other side of campus from where the interview was being conducted). Before conducting each interview, participants were informed about the research project, research aims and were introduced to the interpreter. Participants were informed that that they were more than welcome to make use of the interpreter if it made them feel more comfortable. Once participants were fully aware of the procedures

of the interview each participant signed two consent forms: their acknowledgement of their participation and the audio recording consent form.

A thematic analysis was adopted for this research project. Thematic analysis is concerned with the “identification of the main recurrent or most important issues or themes” that arise within a body of text (Pope, Mays & Popay, 2007, p. 96). Howitt and Cramer’s (2011) six steps approach to thematic analysis was employed in order to ensure a higher level of analysis was achieved

The application of thematic analysis enabled the discovery of “common thematic elements across research participants and the events they report[ed]” (Riessman, 2005, p. 3).

Ethical Considerations

Ethical Considerations were taken into account with regard to the utilisation of the interpreter. The interpreter was thoroughly informed about the research project and was requested to sign a confidentiality agreement that highlighted the expectations of the interpreter by the researcher. Furthermore, permission to continue with the research project was granted by the Psychology Department’s Ethics Committee of the concerned university and by the gate-keepers of the private security company.

Analysis and Discussion

Within this thematic analysis, themes and sub-themes were clearly indicated and discussed in order to provide an in-depth understanding of the experiences of security guards with regard to shift work. The sub-themes in the case of this data were identified and expanded on in order to build on and elaborate on the core and peripheral elements of the main theme.

During the five individual interviews, participants described their own subjective experience of shift work, their various health-related issues, the degree of control in their jobs and the impact of shift work on their non-working lives, as well as how they believe their culture impacted the way they experienced shift work.

These processes assisted in producing five distinct themes amongst the participants: *No time; Lack of control; Tiredness; The effects of working environment on performance and health; and Gender perspective of work*, some of which consisted of sub-themes. Therefore, the generated themes provide a fair interpretation of the various implications of shift work on the employees.

Table 1: indicates the themes and sub-themes

Themes	Sub-themes
No time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to participate in religious activities/cultural activities • Inability to spend time with children
Effects of working environment on performance and health	
Tiredness	Impacts social responsibilities
Lack of control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-worker as a coping strategy • Huge responsibly
Gender perspective of work	

Theme 1: No time

The issue concerning time and more specifically the lack of time were aspects that arose during the interviews with security guards working shift work. Two participants in particular spoke adamantly about the issue of time that was associated with shift work. Participants worked 12 hour long shifts either day or night shifts, in which they only received two days off a week. Although their shifts only technically ran for 12 hours, they tended to start much earlier than their designated working hours. Participants spent up to two hours before their shift actually began as they needed to get ready, eat and be at their transport points in order to be fetched by the security company. This essentially added an additionally two hours to their already long 12 hour shifts. Resulting in participants feeling a sense of anxiety as both participant P and participant M.C (pseudonyms assumed by the participants in order to remain anonymous) reiterate.

I have no time... I don't really have any time...don't have time for anything... I can't do anything...I don't have time". Thus, it became evident through the constant repetition of 'I don't have time' that both participants experienced anxiety or panic as they were unable to do any other activities or duties outside of their job. This assisted in the identification of the sub-theme of inability to participate in religious/ cultural activities as well as the inability to spend time with children and family members.

Inability to participate in religious and cultural activities

The inability to participate in religious and cultural *activities* became a recurring theme across three of the participants. The knowledge of people in South Africa is largely shaped by that of one's culture, and culture in a South African context is a collective mind-set that constructs one's knowledge (Williams, 2012). Consequently, the inability

due to lack of time for these participants to participate in their various cultural and religious activities and ceremonies has become a dominant factor in their lives. Participant M.C reflected by stating:

I don't have time now to go... I am unable to go to church.

He emphasised this point by calculating that the last time that he went to church was in February 2015. Participant P further expanded on this issues by stating:

Can't even go to church... work on Sundays...time is spent at work.

“Church” was described in such a way by the participants that it was not only a spiritual activity but also as a social activity, as participants tended to incorporate the inability to go to church and lack of friends together. Participant Coke experienced difficulty when it came to his inability to attend “traditional ceremonies”, an aspect of his culture that was extremely important to him as a man.

Participants' continuing sense of spirituality and social wellbeing (elements needed for complete health and wellbeing) were hindered as a consequence of shift work (Harvey 2013: p. 1-3).

Inability to Spend Time with Children

The interview finding revealed that participants with children (three out of the five) tended to delegate the pressure of child caring to other family members. This suggests the sub- theme of inability to spend time with children. In general, participants felt that they were too tired to be fully able to take care of their children adequately, as generally they “want to sleep” and felt when they were actually awake they “have to get ready for work”. This confirmed the consensus that shift work, and specifically 12 hour shifts, tends to result in employees struggling to be fully involved in their children's lives. Participant M.C. stated:

Yoh! I have no time for my children... so that affected me a lot... maybe the children feel ignored by me... maybe they feel ignored... I don't have time for my kids.

It becomes evident in the above description that working 12 hour shifts had a huge impact on participants' family lives, as it resulted in very little/no time for participants to spend quality time with their children. This issue evidently has had a negative impact on the participants' perception of themselves and their role as a mother or father, and this reflects the issue and theme of *No time* and its spill-over affect onto the lives of those involved. This is supported by Sparks et al., (2010), who concluded that long working hours resulted in poor relationships between that of the parent and the child. Consequently, this generated an issue linked to the wellbeing of employees, as wellbeing incorporates factors such as “emotional stability [and] ability to love” (Harvey, 2013,

p.2-3). These two factors are compromised at the wellbeing level of employees through the employment of shift work.

The kids don't stay with her.... But at the same times it's her role as a mother to make sure that the kids are safe... it's really hard balancing with work and having to take care of and assume that mother role. (Participant N reported through the interpreter)

The baby stays with her mom... she can't stay with her... she can't spend any time with her... doesn't really have any time ... it is really not nice. (Participant P reported through the interpreter).

Yet again a strong sense of lack of time associated with childcare was raised by both the above participants. Significantly, both participants N and P are working women, who have had no other option but to delegate their responsibility of childcare to other family members as working had become a priority to provide for their families. In the study conducted by Emsile and Hunt (2009), despite drastic changes in the economy, a women's role as caregiver to children and their domestic responsibilities still remain strong. However, in the case of participants N and P, their lack of time due to shift work has impacted this motherhood role as the need to provide for their children had become more important. This ultimately highlighted the issue of *No time* and the ripple effect it has on their duties as mothers, resulting in the *inability to spend time with children* which is a repercussion of working 12 hour shifts.

It has become evident that the lack of time as a result of the shift work schedule of security guards evidently has had a negative impact on both employees' religious/cultural activities and their family lives. Therefore, this created a negative spill-over effect, whereby the time schedule of their work interfered with their off-duty time which is to balance other duties such as parenting, cultural and religious roles. This issue of *No time* corroborates with Williams' (2008) study on the shift work and work-life balance of Canadian citizens. This study revealed that one of the most common complains amongst shift workers' was their feeling that they did "not have enough time for family" (Williams, 2008, p. 1).

Theme 2: Tiredness

A particularly evident issue that arose during the various interviews was the extent of fatigue experienced by the participants. All five participants reported feelings of tiredness as a result of shift work, and expressed that it was an issue that they were faced with on a day-to-day basis. Participant P reported that all she 'wants to do is sleep'. This coincides with participant M.C's response who claimed he 'always wants to sleep'.

This issue of tiredness was then repeated by Participant Coke who repeated; 'you get tired... you might get tired'. Participant N further reiterated this statement by emphasising; 'I feel tired'.

The issue of tiredness amongst participants was extremely relevant and problematic to the participants and became an issue they could not avoid. Despite, having two days off a week, all participants found those days off were allocated to catching up sleep that they had have missed out on due to shift work. This was emphasised by participant M.C;

I only get two days off now...I get home on Monday morning and I just sleep

The tiredness experienced by the participants was a result of the 12 hour shift and in particular the night shifts. It became apparent that this experience of fatigue impacted on the participants' social responsibilities as well as their job performance. This experience is supported by the study carried out by Brown et al. (2010), which exposed that junior doctors working night shifts experienced conflicting demands between their working schedules and non-working lives.

Impact on Personal and Social Life

The issue of *No time* was a huge factor for participants and their time spend with their family members. Participants also described that their high levels of fatigue due to shift work played a huge role in their social lives and personal lives. Participants claimed that fatigue was hugely influential in them fulfilling their social and personal roles such as gardening, attending church, child caring and socialising with friends.

I always want to sleep. Some of my work that I should do at home, I can't. (Participant M.C)

If my baby needs to be taken care of, I will be at home... and I say Yoh I am so tired, please my baby. (Participant N)

He just goes home and sleeps. (Participant Coke)

When she gets home the first thing she wants to do is just sleep because she is so tired. As a result her baby stays at her mom. (Participant P)

Even though individuals in this study were aware of their personal and social activities, they found it increasingly difficult to fulfil these roles as they became more concerned with sleeping than anything else. Participant M.C indicated his love of his garden and how it provided him with satisfaction; but said that he was unable to fully be involved in this passion since working night shifts as all he does during the day is sleep. This correlates with Costa et al., (2003), who stated that people working on shift schedules tended to experience social marginalisation as their lives do not operate on standard day-orientated rhythms. This was seen amongst the participants as when they were available to be socially active, they preferred to spend their free time sleeping. Thus the researcher speculates that due to disturbed sleeping patterns and fatigue participants are unable to participate fully in leisurely activities and social and home responsibilities.

Theme 3: Effects of Working Environment on Performance and Health

This theme is concerned about the working conditions and environments of the participants and its influence on their job performance. Within this theme, participants all experienced different health-related issues due to the working conditions of shift work, which had a negative impact on their work performance in some way or another:

We are forced to be outside where as the weather doesn't help us... so you are not concentrating because... the heat is distracting you. (Participant M.C)

He does get headaches because of the sun obviously and because of the working environment because sometimes there is no shade, so that leads to headaches. (Participant Coke as reported by interpreter)

Participant M.C and Coke both complained about issues of heat and how their inability to receive shade or seek cover due to their working conditions and requirements impacts both their health as well as their job performance. These participants indicated that they experienced some form of discomfort, illness or distraction due to their working conditions, which resulted in some form of negative impact on their job performance and/or health. This resonates with Kahya's (2006) study on the effects of job characteristics and working conditions on job performance. Kahya (2006) concluded that the job performances of employees were negatively impacted when in the presence of a working environment where levels of cold, heat, noise and chemical smells were extremely evident. Even though noise and chemical smells were not identified by that of the participants, extreme levels of weather were reported.

Participant P experienced similar issues due to weather. She said that excessive levels of cold impacted her health as opposed to just her work performance:

On the site that they are working on, it gets really cold and they don't even have guard rooms so they are mostly exposed to flu... doctors find that they mostly sick as a result of working conditions, being exposed to the flu...there is no other way because you have to (Participant P reported through the interpreter)

It is evident that the working environment for these security guards does play a role in their job performance. According to Pilcher, Nadler and Busch (2002), working in cold temperatures resulted in worse performance than in hot weather, but hot temperatures still did have an impact on employees' performance. Not only did the implications of working conditions have an effect on employees' performance, but also on their health. It is evident in the case of both participant Coke and P that they experienced health related issues due to the weather they were exposed to. Participant P even further explained that she had to go to the doctor as a result of flu, in which the doctor claimed the working

conditions were mainly the cause of that. Therefore, one can see how shift work and the working environments of these participants have both had a role in the decrement of the employees' health.

Theme 4: Lack of Control

The *lack of control* appeared to be a hugely influential factor that caused stress for participants. Four out of the five participants complained that in their job they did not

...really have control... they have no control... They do not have a lot of control.

Participants claimed that all decisions had to pass through the higher echelons, resulting in them having to constantly "ask for permission" and "report to supervisors". Asking for permission ranged from fairly simple requests such as having bathroom breaks to more complex and serious issues such as how they should actually behave and what they should do in the event of the appearance of a criminal or suspect.

High Levels of Responsibility

A common feature amongst the participants was the level of responsibility they had taken on as their duties entail the protection of students from harm and crime. While all participants acknowledged that their responsibility as security guards was to ensure the safety for all on campus, many experienced a level of stress due to this heavy responsibility.

So much responsibility for the students... it would be sad if maybe someone would be robbed when they are present. (Participant P)

Yes we have got a big responsibility for the safety of students... We are here for them... To protect them... for their safety. (Participant M.C)

Yes there is a lot they expect from me... I am watching after them... you must look after them... it is stressful. (Participant Coke)

The combination of high responsibility and lack of control resulted in the security guards having 'high strained job', which caused in high levels of stress. This reflected Karasek's Job-Demand control theory (1979) that suggested that the relationship between job demands and job control might cause psychological effect such as stress. As participant Coke stated

There is a lot they expect from us and that it does cause stress.

Although the participants acknowledged that their high level of responsibility is embedded within their job requirements and duties, they felt limited when trying to

protect the students as they have very strict orders and rules to obey by in protection of the students:

In the case where maybe there is a criminal roaming around... we can't exactly approach him and do anything about that...have to call for control for higher supervisors... they don't have guns... so they[supervisors] have most of the control we don't [security guards]. (Participant P).

Participant P further created this image of high responsibility with very little control and say in serious matters of criminal activity. This stressed the issue of lack of control and the high demands experienced by security guards, which affected their health and wellbeing as it caused stress to the individuals involved.

Co-workers as a Coping Strategy

The participants expressed that their lack of control in their job duties was countered through their reliance on their co-workers. Many participants elaborated on this by stating that when they needed additional assistance due to criminal activity/suspicious behaviour or even when they had to be relieved in order to run errands or attend a bathroom break, they relied heavily on their colleagues and friends:

It helps that they have these transmitters to communicate with each other... for example the guy that was here, has to go on lunch and she is here to relieve him... it's the only thing that helps them.(Participant P)

Another participant Mx reiterated the same sentiment; however he placed more emphasis on the reliance of one another when duty called

There are radio transmitters... if he sees someone who is here to do some shady activity... he will call on others to come... and they will sort out as a group. (Participant M)

It became evident through these accounts that the only way in which participants were able to relieve the pressure of their responsibilities and deal with their sense of lack of control was through the support of the other security guards on campus. Therefore, employing co-worker support represented as a strategy used by security guards to decrease stress levels and enhance job performance. This was supported by AbuAlRub (2004) whose study on the job stress, job performance and social support of nurses concluded that the positive effects of social support resulted in higher levels of job performance and retention amongst hospital nurses. This emphasised how social support and in this instance co-worker support could be a coping technique that enables participants to experience less levels of stress and higher levels of job performance. However, it became relevant to consider the issue of the hierarchical structure existing within the organisation, because supervisors and clients were perceived by participants as sources of stress, as opposed to support structures:

Yah our supervisors sometimes they are...Can I say unreasonable. They can be unreasonable... maybe if they are stressed... they come take it out on us. (Participant M.C)

This issue of supervisors imposing stress on participants became an even greater grievance when they had to ask permission to visit the bathroom:

He has to go ask for permission and that causes a lot of stress... they have to approve whether or not he goes to the bathroom... especially now if he has a runny tummy... he can't exactly go to the bathroom. (Participant Coke).

This sentiment was further elaborated on by participant N:

They don't understand... expect them to stay as women to stay where there is a person who is trying to fight you. It is very stressful and very tricky. (Participant N reported through the interpreter)

The coping strategy of co-worker support employed by participants became even more evident as supervisors assumed the role of superiors which ultimately increased the stress of employees. The issues of relying on co-workers for support as opposed to supervisors and clients, correlated with the study of Pisarski, Bochle and Callon (1997, p 144) study which revealed that "the effect of social support from supervisors on psychological symptoms was mediated by co-workers' support".

Theme 5: Gender Perspective of Work

This theme produced a clearer understanding of how South African women and men experience shift work in terms of their culture and designated cultural roles. Interestingly, all participants acknowledged work as being a necessity in order to provide for themselves as well as their children. However, where this communality differed is through gender expected roles. All three men insisted that working is a must within in their culture as a man:

Ya I have to work in my culture. If you don't work you lose respect... even my sisters wouldn't respect me, everyone wouldn't respect me. So if I don't work I lose my dignity. (Participant M.C)

At his place at home it is compulsory that a child goes to work. So his parents and his girlfriend are actually happy... because as a man and as a child you need to work. (Participant Mx)

You have to work as a man...if you are a security officer, it's not because you want to be that security officer for the rest of your life... you are tired of hearing someone told you that you are nothing... So sometimes you just want your dignity to stay... if ever I am working everyone will respect me. (Participant Coke)

It emerged through the narration of their experience of work and shift work, that working was more than just providing for their families. Even though that was a factor that contributed to working, it was also closely linked to their cultural expectations and their own self-esteem. This sentiment that prevails coherent amongst all the male participant was reinforced by Barker and Ricardo (2006, p.162) whom stated that “men’s social recognition and their sense of manhood suffer when they lack work”. Men felt emasculated when they were unable to provide for their families (Barker & Ricardo, 2006). Alternatively women viewed working as purely a providing and motherhood element rather than a cultural norm for women:

Culture says you have to provide for your kids, especially as a women if you are not working where is the food coming from?... so you have to work to provide so that you can go to bed knowing you have provided for them. (Participant P).

It’s her role as a mother to make sure that the kids are safe and that the kids are fine...with working and having to take care of them. (Participant N)

For women, working shift work has become a necessity as opposed to a requirement due to cultural norms or self-esteem. It is linked to their role as a mother rather than their role as a woman. Women appeared to take the strain of providing for their children more heavily than that of men, as men seemed to be more concerned about being respected by family members and the wider society. It was revealed that perhaps working shift work was deliberately chosen by women, as it provided time for them to care for their children as well as provide for them simultaneously. This was supported by Fenwick and Tausig (2001) who claimed that women with children were more likely to have non-standard working hours than man with children. On the other hand it seemed that men merely chose shift work as a last resort to maintain their manhood and dignity. This notion was supported by Emsile and Hunt (2009), who emphasis how gender influences work and work-life balance as men value ‘public life’ more than women, while women value their role in the family domain.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to gain an understanding of the impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of campus security guards. There were four distinct aims that this research project set out to explore and these were; 1) The health related issues such as disrupted sleep patterns or fatigue that might have had spill-over affect onto employees’ job performance and home life; 2) issues of lack of control and high job demands; 3) potential spill-over effects from employees’ home life and social life; and 4) contextual and cultural factors that might influence the way on experiences shift work. This paper has provided a comprehensive thematic analysis of the impact of shift work on the health and wellbeing of security guards. It included the various issues that

arose during the participants' narrations of their experiences which referred to: not time, tiredness/fatigue, effects of working conditions on job performance and health, gender roles and lack of control. It became evident that employees experienced issues similar to that of their colleagues. This was achieved through the use of thematic analysis. The use of thematic analysis enabled the researcher to understand the common experiences of shift work amongst security guards.

This revealed the main conclusion; that shift work did in fact compromise the health and wellbeing of participants. The combination of shift work and security work was shown to have an impact on the health and wellbeing of employees relating to a number of underlying factors: disrupted family lives and religious gatherings; limited control leading to stress; working conditions impact on health; and disturbed sleeping patterns. All of these had a role in decreasing employees' job performance and ultimately impacting on the organisational effectiveness. Karasek's (1979) Job-demand control model suggested that the campus security guards operating on shift work had high strain jobs (Cox-Giffiths, 2010). This is so as findings revealed that the participants faced high demands (responsibility for thousands of student's lives and campus property) while having very little control (dependence on other security guards and supervisors). Furthermore, the Spill-over theory suggested that shift work had a negative interaction on employees' home lives, as issues of no time and feelings of fatigue prevented employees from participating in religious activities and well as negatively affected their role as parents.

This study focuses attention on issues associated with not only shift work but also security work through the employment of the Job-demand control theory and the Spill-over theory. These theoretical frameworks have broadened the understanding of shift work and security work through a South African perspective and qualitative paradigm.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The South African government has implemented a number of rules and regulations with regard to shift work and security work. These include the Health and Safety act of 1993 and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 75. However, employee safety, health and wellness are a fairly low priority in developing countries in comparison to developed or industrialised countries (Sieberhagen, Rothman & Pienaar, 2009). Even though dangerous and physically intense work is focused on extensively in developing countries, issues of psychosocial stressors are far less a priority (Sieberhagen et al., 2009). This becomes problematic as stress may lead to a number of feelings including anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, irritability, tension and boredom which can further lead to poor job performance, lack of motivation and poor social relations (Sieberhagen et al., 2009). According to Sieberhagen et al., (2009), stress may be a contributing factor to poor health in employees. Occupational accidents and diseases cost up to R30 billion

per year in South Africa alone (South African Department of Labour, 2004, as cited in Sieberhagen et al., 2009).

A study conducted by Rothmann revealed that people such as nurses, emergency workers, university educators and police officers are believed to experience the highest levels of stress in South Africa (Sieberhagen et al., 2009). Therefore, if the South African government were to become more involved in issues related to stress and the various factors that stress impacts; it might result in lower health-related costs for the South Africa government and a healthier workforce which would have the potential to increase the country's economy.

While the South African government has the potential to significantly assist in issues linked with shift work, the organisations themselves that exercise shift work have an equally large role to play. According to Costa (2010), the impact shift work has on the stress and health and wellbeing of employees could be minimised through the use of an ergonomic designed shift work system. In which can be achieved through a number of steps in the implementation of shift work which would entail: 1) limited night shifts; 2) avoid successive night shifts; 3) fast moving rotation of shifts; 4) employ clockwise rotations of shifts; 5) the length of shifts should be determined by psycho-physical demand; 6) avoid early starting shifts; and 7) utilise adequate days off (Costa, 2010). In order to reinforce and elaborate on Costa's (2010) ergonomic design to the shift work system, one needs to consider the effects that would occur if these steps are enforced. Limiting night shifts (step one) would be an extremely difficult task to undertake for private security organisations. Specifically, in a South African context where the South African police service (SAPS) experience issues of lack of resource and employees and thus, a large portion of South Africa depends on the private security industry and their resources for protection (Minnaar & Misty, 2004). While the implementation of these steps to decrease health and wellbeing issues may be viewed as impossible or difficult to achieve (particularly steps 1-3), the implementation of prevention is far easier to undertake than attempting to cure a problem that already exists, particularly in a world where employees have become the most valuable resource of an organisation.

Perhaps, instead of limited night shift in the case of private security companies where working around the clock is one of their many requirements, a form of electronic roaster could be created. A roaster could systematically shuffle all staff members (prepared to do night shifts) in order to generate a fair distribution of employees who work night shifts. While, this is not a complete solution to the impact of night shifts on employees' health and wellbeing, it may mitigate any problems associated with shift work. An alternative factor that may lessen the impact on employee's health and wellbeing is personality.

An individual's personality type may be a predictor of a number of job-related factors; job satisfaction, mood/attitude and behaviours (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). Therefore, the type of personality an individual has influences the way he/she performs at his/her place of work (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). Personality is "the dynamic

organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his/her unique adjustments to his/her environment” (Allport, 1937, as cited In Barrick & Ryan, 2003). A study was administered to the South African police services, aimed at determining whether personality screening of police officer during the recruitment process would lessen work-family conflict (Bazana & Dodd, 2013). The study revealed that participants who scored higher on conscientiousness were significantly more likely to manage their time and energy as opposed to those who scored less (Bazana & Dodd, 2013). Conscientiousness is the personality trait that falls under the Big Five personality model, which incorporates five personality traits (Robbins, Odendaal & Roodt, 2009). According to this model, an individual who has a conscientiousness personality can be seen as being organised, dependable and persistent (Robbins et al., 2009). A conscientiousness personality in the workplace is characterised by higher levels of performance, greater endurance and better leadership skills (Robbins et al., 2009). Due to the nature of work perhaps it is a necessity for security guards to contain this personality type; as it may help in the prevention of work-related stress and spill-over. Thus, perhaps incorporating a personality screening during the recruitment processes of security guards could indicate to management which individuals would be better suited for this job now and in the future.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES



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