

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORKLIFE BALANCE AND EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IN PRIVATE SECURITY COMPANIES, KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

Private security services play a significant role in protection of property all over the world hence there is need to improve on their job satisfaction. Rigidity of working time accompanied by unclear work schedule has always remained a recipe for negative work life balance (WLB). This has resulted in high employee turnover in the industry, with some countries like Kenya facing an average annual turnover of 113%. This study analysed the relationship between WLB and employee turnover in private security companies in Kisumu County, Kenya. Specific objectives were to determine the level of employee turnover, determine the state of WLB, and to establish the relationship between employee turnover and WLB. Herzberg Two Factor Theory was adopted to guide the study. Correlational design was adopted on a target population of 12,079 security guards, and a sample size of 387 respondents was obtained through proportional stratified sampling. Questionnaire and interview schedule were used to collect data. Findings showed that respondents agreed that WLB was poor ($M=4.20$; $SD=1.036$) and employee turnover was high ($M=4.03$; $SD= M=4.20$) where WLB ($\beta=0.32$; $p=0.01$) is a significant predictor of turnover. It is concluded that WLB practices in the industry have had minimal impact in reducing turnover. It is recommended that the management of security firms should adopt practices such as additional work-shifts to reduce long working hours faced by the guards so as to enable them fulfill their social needs. Similarly, job satisfaction surveys should continuously be conducted among the guards to unearth working conditions which might lead to employee turnover intentions. The limitation of this study was that it relied on data obtained specifically from the private security guards hence there is need to move to other security providers and reveal how WLB relates with employee turnover in their contexts. This might help in generalizing the relationship between WLB and employee turnover in the security services provision sector.

Key words: *Work life balance; Employee Turnover; Private Security Companies; Flexible work time arrangement; Working hours*

1.1 Introduction

Private security services are essential in ensuring protection of both private and public property, besides securing intellectual property and sensitive corporate information of organizations (Dogan et al, 2015; Koech, 2020). Tayali and Sakyi (2020) observe that private security personnel play a vital function in protecting businesses, banks, schools premises, facilities and installations, alongside protecting people from criminals. The number of security guards has grown substantially, as more and more private security services are engaged to protect people and property in many countries (Ejdus & Juncos, 2018). In most nations across the globe, private security provides close to 85% of services including protection to property (Scollan, 2011). However, security guards undergo many challenges during their tasks of providing services. They often work in unfavourable environments (too cold or too hot, noisy, dusty) and under conditions such as confined workspaces, irregular and extended working hours, shift work, and night work,

among others (Jovanović et al, 2020). Whereas scholars (Dogan et al, 2015; Jovanović et al, 2019; Leino, 2013) have associated such challenges faced by security guards' work with health related outcomes, limited focus seems to have been directed on Work Life Balance (WLB) situation in the sector. For this matter, limited knowledge is available on how work might have interfered with social life of these security guards and also how such interference relate to turnover among the workforce.

According to Chemirmir, Musebe and Nassiuma (2017), family and work are the most important elements of everyone's life and competing demands between them can cause conflict hence negatively affect the wellbeing of workers. Work life balance practices are organizational changes designed to reduce work family conflict so as to enable employees to be effective in both work and personal roles (Gragano, Simbula & Miglioretti, 2020). Work life balance practices also improve the autonomy of workers in coordinating and integrating the work and non-work areas of their lives (Armstrong, 2009). Flexible working time and work shift arrangements have been identified as some practices associated with WLB which reduce work and personal role conflicts (Hashim, Ullah & Khan, 2017). Many researchers on WLB have focused in sectors away from private security and have not related the same with employee turnover. For instance, Davidescu, et al (2020) investigated how work time and workspace flexibility influence job satisfaction and job performance among Romanian employees. Li (2018) involved state owned enterprises to analyse how employee work-life balance affect organizational commitment in China. In another work, Idowu (2020) used a sample from manufacturing firms to explore how flexible working hours arrangement influence employee retention in Nigeria. Another study by Koech et al (2020) involved security personnel in public secondary schools in Baringo County, Kenya, to examine the influence of job design on job satisfaction. The foregoing discussions provide evidence that the relationship between WLB and employee turnover in private security sector has been overlooked by researchers in this area.

Employee turnover forms a major problem to human resource managers all over the world (Koech, 2020). Employee turnover is an indication of lack of job satisfaction emanating from the working environment (Armstrong, 2009). By identifying the aspects of security guard's work that explain their level of job satisfaction, Nalla and Cobbina (2016) argue that management of private security firms can design strategies for improving satisfaction and job performance. Employee turnover has been widely documented especially in the hospitality sector (Bula & Muriithi, 2018; Emiroğlu, Akova & Tanriverdi, 2015; Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018), with clear links to job satisfaction. However, employee turnover in the private security sector has had scanty focus. This is in contrast to working conditions facing security guards in this sector which has extensively been documented (Abdel et al, 2018; Bazana, Campbell & Kabungaidze, 2016; Dogan et al, 2015; Pattnaik, Pradhan & Jena, 2016; Terpstra, 2016). This is despite of high rates of employee being experienced by private security firms especially in the developing countries such as Kenya.

In Kenya, high rates of employee turnover have been witnessed within the private security industry, according to statistics from Protective Security Industry Association (PSIA, 2021). The turnover cases in the private security industry as documented by Kenya security industry association (KSIA) and the protective security industry association (PSIA), is as shown in Table 1.1. KSIA and PSIA are conglomerations of security firms charged with harmonizing business operations within the security industry on behalf of different security companies in Kenya. However, KSIA and PSIA are yet to relate working conditions with turnover of security guards in

the industry. Table 1.1 analyses turnover rates in twenty two security companies operating in Kisumu County between 2016 and 2020.

Table 1.1: Employee Turnover in Security Firms Operating in Kisumu County

Year	Those who left	Existing workforce
2016	4,870	15, 555
2017	4, 893	15, 547
2018	4, 882	15, 550
2019	4, 923	15, 438
2020	5, 100	15, 568

Source: KSIA/PSIA data, 2021 (Obtained by the researcher)

Table 1.1 illustrates high employee turnover rates in the private security sector in the county from records held by PSIA in 2021. Whereas Harris, Tang and Tseng (2002) argue that employee turnover rate 30% and below is capable of maximizing productivity, private security sector in Kisumu County has been experiencing above 30% rates between 2016 and 2020.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Poor work life balance (WLB) has been documented to a source of employee turnover in sectors such as teaching practice, medical services, and hospitality sector. The relationship between WLB and employee turnover in the private security sectors has attracted limited attention from scholars. Similarly, whether security guards voluntarily or involuntarily quit their jobs has not received much focus. This study was set to investigate the relationship between WLB and employee turnover in private security firms operating in Kisumu County, Kenya.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

This study investigated the relationship between work life balance and employee turnover in private security companies in Kisumu County, Kenya.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives of the study were to;

- i. Determine the level of employee turnover in private security companies in K public secondary schools in Homa Bay County
- ii. Determine the state of work life balance in private security companies in Kisumu County, Kenya
- iii. Establish the relationship between work life balance and employee turnover in private security companies in Kenya

2.0 Theoretical and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study was guided by the Two-Factor theory developed in 1959 by Herzberg, Mauser and Snyderman. According to Yusoff, Kian and Idris (2013), Two-Factors Theory is built on the factors for employees' job satisfactions. These are Extrinsic and Intrinsic factors, also referred to respectively as motivation – hygiene factors. The motivational-hygiene theory indicates that a certain set of factors existing in the workplace can cause job satisfaction, while another set of factors can cause job dissatisfaction (Brito, 2021). The motivational-hygiene theory includes job content, known as motivators, and job context, also referred to as hygiene factors influencing job satisfaction (Ashton, 2018). Examples of job content strategies that organizations use are variations of work responsibility, recognition, advancement, and sense of achievement (Khan, Ruch & Khan, 2018). Examples of job context strategies that organizations can implement are compensation strategies, work environment changes, company policy, and job security (Alshmemri, Shahwan-Akl & Maude, 2017). Motivation and job satisfaction are the primary constructs of the Two-Factor Theory (Herzberg, Mauser & Snyderman, 1959).

The constructs of the two-factor theory was the appropriate lens to explore job content and job context components of WLB because understanding what motivates employees goes a long way in assisting organizations to understand employee turnover.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 The Concept of Work life Balance

Work Life Balance (WLB) is the working arrangements that make sure an employee balances between personal and work responsibilities (Mulwa, 2017). The concept work life balance is commonly used to describe policies that were previously known as family friendly, though they have been extended beyond the scope of the family (Obiageli, Uzochukwu, and Ngozi, 2015). Guest (2002, cited in Haar, Russo, Sune, & Ollier-Malaterre, 2014), conceptualizes work-life balance as the quality of working life and its connection to personal life and activities and emphasizes an individual's subjective perception on how well the work and the rest of life are balanced. According to Poulouse and Sudarsan (2017), work-life balance addresses the conflict between family and work: it reflects the absence of work-family conflict or the intensity or rate of recurrence with which family interferes with work and work interferes with family. Sen and Hooja (2018) observe that there has is growing concern that as the hours of work are getting longer along with added pressures and demands of work, it is leaving very little time for quality time beyond work environment. Work life Balance is therefore an amalgamation of positive approaches from both the individual and the organization to realize the importance of a balanced and satisfied work life and life beyond work boundaries (Gagnano et al 2020). Flexible working hours and job shifts or changes have been noted as some practices of ensuring that WLB is achieved (Knaus & Otterbach, 2016). However, extant literature on WLB tends to concentrate on its influence on employee performance. Moreover, limited focus seems to have been directed on its relationship with employee turnover in the private security sector.

2.2.2 The concept of Employee Turnover

The depressing impact of employee turnover forms a considerable topic for scholars, academicians and organizational managers (Chowdhury & Nazmul, 2017). Niguse (2019) explains that turnover

is a situation in which employees depart the organization for several reasons. Employee turnover is the movement into and out of an organization by the work force (Hom, Lee, Shaw & Hausknecht (2017). Several scholars have documented that different factors as determinants of employee turnover in diverse contexts. Demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, education, as well as the factors such as tenure, wage, position, and working conditions were established as determining employee turnover in hospitality sector in Turkey (Emiroğlu et al 2015). Life satisfaction was found to be positively associated with job satisfaction, and negatively associated with turnover intention among employees in public universities in Nigeria (Ohunakin et al, 2019). In Kenya, factors such as career growth, better management/supervision, better location, change of work environment and need for developmental focus were found to be determinants of employee turnover among staff at the World Vision International Somalia (Mulwa, 2010). According to Nahar, Islam and Ullah (2017), WLB forms one of the major factors causing employee turnover in many organizations. This is because the design of some jobs do not provide for autonomy but strict adherence to how, when, and where the duties are to be carried out (Nalla & Cobbina, 2016).

2.2.3 The relationship between WLB and Employee Turnover

Empirical studies focusing on work life balance practices have tended to focus on its influence on employee performance at the expense of employee turnover. Similarly, most of the existing literature have not focused on private security sector with regards to employee turnover as a consequence of WLB. For instance, Davidescu, et al (2020) investigated the link between employee development and work time and workspace flexibility as relevant characteristics of sustainable HRM, job satisfaction and job performance among Romanian employees. The empirical results revealed that these new types of workspaces are highly appreciated by employees, generating a growing interest among them. Partial home working, the mix between working from home and working in a company's office, has been considered an optimal solution in increasing organizational performance, social and professional relationships. Hashim et al (2017) conducted a study on the impact of time flexibility on employee performance in teaching faculty in Government College of Management where the respondents were 75 staff members from academic section in Malaysia. The results showed that there was significant relationship between flexible time and employee performance. Similarly, Sharafizad et al (2011) used a mixed method study of 495 academic and general staff at an Australian University to investigate the utilisation of flexible work arrangements. The findings indicated that employee job type was significantly related to the take up of flexible work arrangements as well as employee satisfaction with current work-life balance. Haar et al (2014) investigated the effects of work-life balance (WLB) on several individual outcomes across cultures. Using a sample of 1,416 employees from seven distinct populations – Malaysian, Chinese, New Zealand Maori, New Zealand European, Spanish, French, and Italian – SEM analysis showed that WLB was positively related to job and life satisfaction and negatively related to anxiety and depression across the seven cultures. Individualism/collectivism and gender egalitarianism moderated these relationships. High levels of WLB were more positively associated with job and life satisfaction for individuals in

individualistic cultures, compared with individuals in collectivistic cultures. Li (2018) explored the effects of employee work-life balance on organizational commitment in China's context. Questionnaire was used to collect data in a state-owned enterprise and the sample size was 363. Quantitative research method was used for data analysis. This study found that work-life balance is significantly and positively linked to organizational commitment in China's context. Also, employee work-life balance was found to be related with demographic and occupational factors. On their part, Othman, Mustafa, Hamzah and Abdullah (2019) explored the influence of flexible work arrangement and remuneration on employees' job satisfaction among 163 academics in private colleges in Malaysia. Based on the result of factor analysis, it was found that job satisfaction of academics can be divided into four dimensions; career and salary satisfaction, creativity satisfaction, administration satisfaction and attitudinal satisfaction. Factors that significantly influence the dimensions of job satisfaction are flexible work arrangement, salary and promotion.

In Africa, Idowu (2020) examined the role of flexible working hours' arrangement on employee job performance and the retention in Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from 227 permanent and contract employees from five manufacturing industries. This study found that flexible work-hour arrangements improved employee performance, increased retention of employees and reduced employee work stress. In another study, Lucille (2017) looked at how flexible work arrangements can decrease time management problems whilst increasing job satisfaction and performance in South Africa. This was a quantitative research approach involving online administration of questionnaire to a sample size of 92 employees. Findings revealed that flexible work arrangements was preferred amongst the majority of employees and that a significant positive relationship exists between flexible work arrangements and job satisfaction and performance amongst employees of all ages. In their study, Koech et al (2020) examined the influence of job design on job satisfaction of security personnel in public secondary schools in Baringo County. The findings showed that job design had significant relationship with security personnel's job satisfaction.

It is evident from the foregoing discussions that focus on private security companies regarding the relationship between WLB and employee turnover has been overlooked. Owing to their critical role in protecting private property across the globe, it was prudent for an analysis to be done on how WLB relate with employee turnover.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used correlational research design with mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. According to Curtis, Comiskey & Dempsey (2016), correlational research design attempts to compare the relationship between variables, and attempts to highlight how a dependent variable is influenced by an independent variable. Mixed methods approach offers a bridge by using quantitative methods to measure some aspects of the phenomenon under

study and qualitative methods for others (Dawadi, Shrestha & Giri, 2021). This approach provides for complementarity in data collection, analysis and interpretation (Shorten & Smith, 2017). The design was appropriate because it aided the study in gaining from the concept of concurrent triangulation.

3.2 Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The target population included all the 12,079 security guards from 20 private firms providing private security services in Kisumu County. This study employed Taro Yamane's (1967; cited in Israel, 2013) formula to calculate the sample size, as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n is the sample size; N is the population size, and e is the level of precision (0.05). The computed sample size was 387 guards. Proportional stratified sampling technique was employed, where each individual company served as a stratum, to select respondents based on the population in each stratum. Government and trade union officers were also selected to participate in the study as key informants

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Two instruments were used for data collection in this research: Questionnaire and interview schedule. The study used closed ended questionnaire to collect quantitative data from the respondents. Questionnaire was deemed suitable in this study since it solicited views of guards on their experiments with WLB (Taherdoost, 2016). With regards to interviews, the researcher observed the principle of saturation as recommended by Morse (2015).

3.4 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Content validity index (CVI) was used by the researcher to test validity. According to Yusoff (2019), content validity is the degree of relevance of expected constructs for a particular purpose of assessment. Expert judgment was used to analyse content validity. In this vein, judgments of five experts were rated on a scale of 1 to 4 as: 1 = Relevance; 2 = Clarity; 3 = Simplicity, and 4 = Ambiguity. A calculated rating of 0.96 (96%) was obtained. This was considered as high validity hence viewed as satisfactorily meeting the required level for measuring the expected constructs, as guided by Aila and Ombok (2016).

Reliability of study instrument was measured through split-half method using data obtained during pilot study involving 38 respondents randomly selected from study population and who were eventually excluded from the final data collection exercise. Cronbach's Alpha was used to calculate the reliability measurement coefficients. The calculated reliability of the study generated an Alpha coefficient of 0.849 which was considered suitable since this was greater than the threshold of 0.7 articulated by Taherdoost (2016).

3.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 and presented in tables. On the other hand, qualitative data obtained

from interviews was analysed through Thematic Analysis. This entailed categorization of generated answers into outstanding themes and reported in narrative forms as articulated by Braun and Clarke (2006)

4.0 Results and Discussions

4.1 Results

4.1.1 The Level of Employee Turnover

The second objective of the study looked at employee turnover in private security companies operating in Kisumu County. The descriptive analysis ran by the researcher obtained results as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Descriptive Analysis of Employee Turnover

	Mean	SD	N
Voluntary turnover (resignation and voluntary job switch)	5.23	0.870	270
Involuntary turnover (dismissal and suspensions)	2.82	0.786	270
Departmental transfers (forced transfers to new stations)	3.56	1.047	270
Departmental transfers (voluntary transfers to new stations)	4.52	1.034	270
Mean Score	4.033	0.934	270

Table 4.1 illustrates that employee turnover has a mean of 4.033 ($M=4.033$; $SD=0.934$). From the study questionnaire, 4 denotes High Rate. Conversely, voluntary turnover, a situation where guards resign on their own and seek new opportunities in other security companies ($M=5.23$; $SD=0.870$) is the most common type of employee turnover among security companies. Another important finding is that inter department transfer (or transfers to other stations) is also frequent ($M=4.52$; $SD=1.034$). This is a situation where employees decide to shift to other departments or stations, probably because they (employees) feel that they may get extra gains from these new stations. However, respondents considered forced inter-departmental transfers ($M=3.56$; $SD=1.047$) as neither high nor low, while cases of dismissal or involuntary turnover ($M=2.82$; $SD=0.786$) were considered not to be high.

Further, qualitative data obtained from interviews done with key informants concerning employee turnover in private security firms confirms the findings from quantitative analyses. Representative comments were:

“Dissatisfaction among the guards is high, and most guards are always on the lookout for better paying jobs”.

Another representative statement was:

“Most private security firms do not give the mandatory warnings to guards who contravene company regulations, and proceed to dismiss the guards summarily”.

Results obtained indicate that voluntary turnover, whereby employees resign and seek for better paying opportunities, is the main type of employee turnover in private security companies operating in Kisumu County. This means that dissatisfaction with salaries paid makes guards to voluntarily quit employment in search of better pay elsewhere.

4.1.2 Level of Work Life Balance

The respondents were asked to rate the items on WLB on a scale of 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 Neutral, 4 – Agree and 5 - Strongly Agree. The results were analyzed and presented in terms of means and standard deviations as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2: Mean and standard deviations on WLB

No	Items	N	Mean	SD
1	Work is not arranged in any running shifts to avoid monotony		4.29	.99
2	Working hours are not limited to 8hrs per day, above which overtime is paid		4.18	1.07
3	Co-workers do not have cordial working relationships		4.11	1.06
	Overall Mean	270	4.20	1.04

Table 4.2 shows that the means on all the three items on the WLB variable fall above M= 4.00. In our likert scale the mean of 4.00 is considered to imply ‘agree’ therefore we can conclude that respondents agreed that WLB in the sector was not favourable.

These findings are corroborating with those from the principals’ interview. When asked to comment on availability of work schedules in their school and teacher adherence to the same, one of the principals had this to say;

“The long working hours without day offs largely contributes to frequent absenteeism from work due to fatigue”.

4.1.3 Relationship between WLB and Employee Turnover

The study sought to establish the relationship between WLB and employee turnover.

Table 4.3: Correlation between WLB and Employee turnover

		WLB	Employee Turnover
WLB	Pearson Correlation	1	.560**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	270	270
Employee Turnover	Pearson Correlation	.560**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	240	240

Table 4.3 shows a correlation of r =0.560 with p= 0.000. A correlation of r = 0.560 implies that there is a positive correlation between WLB and employee turnover. This implies that there was a significant relationship between WLB and employee turnover.

4.1.4 Regression analysis of Make-up time and teachers’ performance

The study sought to determine how WLB explain employee turnover. To help in this, a linear regression analysis was computed based on the following model

$$Y = a + \beta x_3 + e_i$$

Where

Y – Employee turnover (Dependent variable)

a – Constant

β - change in Y

X – WLB (Independent or Predictor Variable)

Regression analysis is presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Regression model summary of WLB and Employee turnover

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F
1	.791 ^a	.626	.624	80.462

Table 4.4 shows R Square of 0.626 with an adjusted R square of 0.624. This implies that WLB explains 62.6% variations in employee turnover among private security firms in the study area. The remaining 37.4% of variation in employee turnover is attributed to other factors other than WLB. However, to determine whether WLB practices were a significant predictors of employee turnover, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was computed as shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: ANOVA of WLB Practices on Employee turnover

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.129	1	4.129	46.450	.000 ^b

a. Dependent Variable: Employee turnover

b. Predictors: (Constant), WLB

From Table 4.5, it can be noted that WLB practices was indeed a significant predictor of employee turnover in the private security sector [$F(1, 270) = 46.450, p < .05$]. This means that the level of employee turnover in a private security company can be significantly predicted by WLB practiced by the organization. Table 4.6 shows the values of the coefficients of the regression.

Table 4.5: Coefficients table of WLB and Employee turnover

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.352	0.34		6.92	.000
	WLB	0.321	0.086	.560	3.733	.000

Table 4.6 shows that a unit of WLB leads to an increase of 0.321 in employee performance. Based on P-Value of 0.00, this increase was found to be significant since it was less than 0.05 level of significant.

Thus;

$$Y = a + \beta x + e,$$

Then

$$Y = 2.352 + 0.321 (X_3)$$

4.2 Discussions

The study findings indicate that 62.6% variations in employee turnover in private security sector is attributed to WLB. It is additionally revealed that long working hours without day offs contribute to fatigue, absenteeism, and turnover intentions. These are hygiene factors attached to the work of security guards as espoused by the Two-Factor theory of motivation. This in turn affects employee commitment and consequently employee turnover in the sector as noted in Alshmemri et al. (2017). Job design of security guards do not provide for autonomy but strict adherence to how, when, and where the duties are to be carried without considering their WLB. Inflexible working hours has been attributed to employee satisfaction among employees in other contexts. Hashim et al (2017) drew a link between time flexibility and employee performance in a teaching faculty in Malaysia. Sharafizad et al (2011) also found significant association between flexible work arrangement and employee satisfaction among academic and general staff at an Australian University. Increased retention of employees was directly associated with flexible working hours' arrangement by Idowu (2020) in Nigeria. Job design including inflexible working hours was additionally found by Koech et al (2020) to have significant relationship with security personnel's job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Baringo County, Kenya. It is therefore emerging that poor WLB inherent in inflexible working time and job design highly contribute to employee turnover in the private security sector in the study area.

5.0 Conclusions

It was therefore concluded that there was a significant positive correlation between WLB and employee turnover. It is also concluded that the conditions of work faced by employees in the private security sector over ride WLB practices hence contribute minimally in reducing turnover of employees.

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