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Exploring the Effects of Job Stress on Employee Satisfaction and Performance in Private Security Companies in Botswana

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Abstract:

The objective of this study was to look at the impact of job stress on employee satisfaction and performance in Botswana's private security companies, with a specific emphasis on psychological safety. Using a quantitative research approach based on the positivist paradigm, structured questionnaires were delivered to 80 security professionals from eight private security organizations (10 respondents per company).The study found that Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) (β = 0.681) and Job Risk and Safety Threats (JRST) (β = 0.627) were the strongest positive predictors of psychological safety, emphasizing the significance of a supportive and secure work environment. Managerial Support Structures (MSS) and Professional Development Autonomy (PDA) revealed unanticipated unfavorable correlations. The paper suggests revising operational safety measures, such as implementing limited access to defensive equipment and improved physical protection standards. Aligning safety resources with the high-risk nature of the job is critical for increasing morale, job satisfaction, and performance. These findings have significant implications for governments and private security firms in terms of reducing job stress and improving employee well-being in high-risk industries.

Keywords:

Job, Stress, Performance, Private, Security

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Introduction

Employee performance is highly influenced by corporate culture, which has an impact on both organizational success and society growth (Nguyen et al., 2023; Patel & Zhang, 2022; Sharma et al. 2025). Job stress has become a major concern in Botswana's private security industry, as demonstrated by an increase in absenteeism, emotional weariness, interpersonal disputes, and operational mistakes (Song et al., 2020; Yu et al., 2022). One especially disturbing factor is the incidence of successful robberies, which have substantial psychological consequences for security personnel. Such occurrences frequently cause increased worry, tension, and feelings of helplessness. If not addressed properly, these emotional pressures can have major organizational consequences, including decreased productivity, disengagement, and higher staff turnover rates (Hafeez, 2024; Gede, 2018).

A large body of research has investigated the link between occupational stress and decreased psychological well-being, work satisfaction, and performance (Cooper, 1998; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Nasima et al., 2020). These impacts are generally most noticeable when high job demands are combined with limited support or autonomy. This mismatch is particularly pronounced in Botswana's private security industry, where security agents routinely work under hard and hazardous conditions while receiving little institutional acknowledgment or assistance.

The problem is exacerbated by sector-specific pressures. Security personnel work long, irregular hours, including night shifts and holiday responsibilities, which causes sleep disturbance, physical tiredness, and cognitive fatigue (Brough & Biggs, 2015). Furthermore, the industry is characterized by poor earnings and little benefits, leaving many officers with long-term financial instability (Zhou & George, 2022). Job insecurity persists owing to short-term, client-dependent contracts, leaving employees uncertain about long-term employment (Moalusi & Jones, 2020). The absence of societal and organizational acknowledgment exacerbates low self-esteem and morale (Topping, 2016).

Furthermore, many policemen are directly exposed to violence and criminal threats, particularly when stationed in high-risk sectors such as banks, bars, or political gatherings (ILO, 2021). Inadequate working conditions, ranging from high-crime areas to harsh temperatures, frequently lack the required infrastructure and emergency support (G4S, 2020; ILO, 2021). The lack of professional training exacerbates these dangers, leaving staff unprepared for emergencies and lowering confidence and competence (Zhao et al., 2019).

Internal stresses include inconsistent or imprecise expectations, which lead to confusion, irritation, and job ambiguity. Officers typically perform many duties, such as customer service, conflict settlement, and emergency first aid (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). Weak management assistance and inadequate

monitoring further isolate workers in high-stress workplaces (Karatepe, 2013). Repetitive chores, such as lengthy gatewatching or CCTV monitoring, can also lead to boredom and disengagement.

Despite the proven prevalence of these stresses in worldwide studies, there is still a considerable study vacuum in understanding their impact on Botswana's private security industry. While research in other areas, such as healthcare, education, and public administration, have shown that uncontrolled job stress has a detrimental impact on job satisfaction and performance (Rizwan et al., 2014; Chen et al., 2022), the private security profession has mainly been overlooked. Notably, a recent MDPI (2021) study investigated security officers' turnover intentions but did not examine the direct link between job stress and employee outcomes such as performance or satisfaction.

To close this gap, this study will look into the effects of job stress on staff performance and job satisfaction in Botswana's private security business. Based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) framework, the study aims to investigate how unique stressors interact with organizational support systems to affect critical employee outcomes.

The study will be guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What are the key job stressors experienced by private security officers in Botswana?

RQ2: How does job stress affect employee performance in the private security sector?

RQ3: What is the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction among private security officers?

RQ4: To what extent do organizational resources (e.g., training, managerial support, scheduling practices) moderate the effects of stress on employee outcomes?

RQ5. What interventions can be proposed to mitigate job stress and improve employee performance and satisfaction?

This study adds theoretical value by using the JD-R and PSC models to a high-risk, under-researched vocation. Practically, it offers businesses and governments with significant insights on how to address employee well-being through focused interventions such as enhanced shift scheduling, psychological assistance, fair compensation, and access to professional training. The main purpose is to provide practical suggestions that will improve staff well-being, performance, and retention in Botswana's private security industry, while also increasing the sector's ability to adapt to escalating operational demands and social expectations.

Literature Review

The literature review explores existing research on the relationship between organisational culture and employee performance, with a focus on theories, models, and empirical findings relevant to. It provides

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a conceptual foundation for understanding how stress influence workplace satisfaction, motivation, and outcomes. This section also identifies gaps in the literature that justify the need for the current study.

Causes of Stress in Security Industry

Occupational stress in the private security business develops when job demands exceed available resources, jeopardizing performance and satisfaction. The Job Demands-Resources (JD R) paradigm is among the most widely recognized in organizational psychology. It proposes that job demands (e.g., excessive workload, irregular hours, exposure to violence) fuel burnout and inefficiency through a health-impairment process, whereas job resources (e.g., supervisory support, autonomy) mitigate these effects and boost engagement via a motivational pathway (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Annual Reviews, 2023).

Security personnel have a variety of employment tasks. These include long, unpredictable hours leading to exhaustion (Brough & Biggs, 2015); low pay, financial insecurity (Zhou & George, 2022); job insecurity (Moalusi & Jones, 2020); limited recognition (Topping, 2016); exposure to threats (ILO, 2021); poor working environments (ILO, 2021; G4S, 2020); insufficient training (Zhao et al., 2019); role ambiguity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014); lack of supervisory support (Karatepe, 2013); and repetitive tasks causing fatigue (Sonnen These pressures correspond to the "bad things" at work that damage psychological health and performance (Schaufeli, 2017; Demerouti & Nachreiner, 2019).

Job resources, such as relevant leadership, organizational support, and training, on the other hand, help to reduce the negative impact of demands and increase motivation. Supervisor autonomy support, for example, enhances engagement by addressing psychological desires for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, according to self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2017; Frontiers, 2024). According to research in security settings, supporting leadership reduces burnout and increases performance (MDPI, 2023).

Another analogous perspective is the Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC), which focuses on organizational culture. A strong PSC is defined by managerial commitment to mental health, open communication, and employee involvement. It reduces absenteeism, stress, and turnover (Hall et al., 2010).

According to Herzberg (1968), workplace dissatisfaction is caused by the absence of hygienic factors (such as poor pay, job insecurity, and working conditions), but job happiness is caused by motivators such as recognition and meaningful work. This is consistent with the observed stressors in security job, showing that while fixing hygiene deficiencies may reduce discontent, true fulfillment necessitates positive employment characteristics and resources. Combining these theories results in a sophisticated viewpoint: Excessive expectations exhaust psychological resources, leading to burnout and worse

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satisfaction/performance. Adequate resources reduce the impact by enhancing motivation, engagement, and positive performance outcomes. This holistic viewpoint informs the following hypotheses:

H1: High job demands (e.g., hours, threats, and poor conditions) are negatively related to job satisfaction.

H2: High job demands are negatively related to employee performance.

H3: Job resources (e.g., supervisory support, training, PSC) are positively related to job satisfaction.

H4: Job resources are positively related to employee performance.

H5: Job resources moderate the relationship between job demands and both satisfaction and performance such that high resources buffer negative effects.

These hypotheses underpin the following conceptual framework:



Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

This model reflects the JD-R health-impairment and motivational pathways, incorporates PSC's cultural influence, and aligns with Herzberg's distinction between hygiene and motivator factors.

Methods and Data

This study employed a quantitative research method guided by the positivist paradigm, which emphasizes objectivity, quantifiable outcomes, and hypothesis testing (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The positivist approach promotes the use of structured tools to collect numerical data, allowing for a more scientific investigation of the relationship between job stress, employee happiness, and performance. A

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descriptive study design was used to explain the characteristics and patterns of stress experienced by Botswana's private security personnel. Furthermore, inferential statistical techniques were used to assess correlations and draw conclusions about the wider population based on sample data (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2019). This approach allows us to evaluate assumptions based on the Job Demands-Resources model. The use of statistical tools produced actual data on how job demands and resources affect satisfaction and performance. Overall, the technique ensured that results were generalizable, valid, and grounded on observable facts. The study was conducted in Botswana, Gaborone City, focusing on private security companies. The survey population was security officers from G4S Botswana, Security Systems, Shield Security Botswana, Waygard Security (Pty) Ltd, Soteria Security Services, Accelron Security Services, Hawk Eye Risk Solutions, and Floodlight Security.

In terms of sample size, the survey was conducted among employees of the eight businesses listed in the preceding section, with a concentration on private security firms in Botswana. The research had 80 participants, with 10 structured questionnaires distributed to each business, resulting in 80 completed responses. Individuals were employed as the unit of study to investigate and appreciate security personnel's personal viewpoints and experiences under a range of job conditions. These included working conditions, compensation and job security, job risk and safety threats, role clarity and expectations, managerial and supervisory support, professional development and autonomy, and a psychosocial safety climate (PSC).

A questionnaire was used as the primary data collection instrument. Data was collected throughout three months, from January to March 2025, during working shifts, with the agreement of business management. To ensure the survey's validity and reliability, the majority of items were adapted from recognized scales utilized in past empirical research, resulting in content consistency and theoretical alignment. The questionnaire included closed-ended questions with multiple response alternatives designed to collect views and attitudes about standardized metrics. This study uses multiple regression analysis which describes the relationship between independent and dependent variables with the following equation:

$$Y = a + b_1 \mathbf{X}_1 + b_2 \mathbf{X}_2 + b_3 \mathbf{X}_3 + b_4 \mathbf{X}_4 + b_5 \mathbf{X}_5 + b_6 \mathbf{X}_6 + b_7 \mathbf{X}_7$$

Information: Y = Decision Variable

a =Constants

Regression coefficient of independent variables =b1, b2, b3, b4, b5, b6, b7

Independent variables:

X1=Working Conditions (WC)

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X2=Compensation and Job Security (CJS)

X3=Job Risk and Safety Threats (JRST)

X4=Role Clarity and Expectations (RCE)

X5=Managerial and Supervisory support (MSS)

X6=Professional Development and Autonomy (PDA)

X7=Psychological Safety Climate (PSC)

Results

This section summarizes and discusses the study's results on how job stress impacts employee happiness and performance in Botswana's private security organizations. It investigates major patterns that emerged from the data and relates them to the study objectives and questions. The study focuses on the impact of sector-specific stresses such as irregular shifts, poor pay, and limited support, and how these affect employee outcomes. Relevant statistical information is employed to back up the conclusions. The section also contextualizes the findings within the current literature, offering insight into the larger theoretical and practical consequences.

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Variable	Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	60	75%
	Female	20	25%
Age	Less than 30 years	50	62.5%
	30-40 years	20	25%
	40-55 years	10	12.5%
Education	O-Level	40	50%
	Technical Education	30	37.5%
	Graduate level	10	12.5%
Work experience	Less than 5 years	50	62.5%
	5-10 years	20	25%
	Over 10 years	10	12.5%

Table 1: Demographics of Respondents

The findings reveal a predominantly male (75%) and young workforce (62.5% under 30), indicating significant youth employment in the industry but possible exposure to stress. The majority of respondents had a low level of education (50% with an O-Level) and little job experience (62.5% with less than five years), indicating a lack of coping tools and opportunities for advancement. This suggests a transitory and undersupported workforce. These demographics are consistent with significant stressors found in the study, such as job instability, bad working conditions, and a lack of support, all of which are likely to influence job satisfaction and performance.

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Variable	Reliability statistics	Cronbach Alpha	Information
WC	0.6	0.876	Reliable
CJS	0.6	0.798	Reliable
JRST	0.6	0.829	Reliable
RCE	0.6	0.813	Reliable
MSS	0.6	0.890	Reliable
PDA	0.6	0.921	Reliable
PSC	0.6	0.898	Reliable

Table 2: Reliability Test Results

The reliability data show that all variables have good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.798 to 0.921, much beyond the usually recognized criterion of 0.7. This shows that the items inside each construct measure their respective ideas consistently. Despite a stated reliability statistic threshold of 0.6, all variables exceed it, demonstrating their dependability. Professional Development and Autonomy (PDA) has the highest dependability (α = 0.921), while Compensation and Job Security (CJS) has the lowest (α = 0.798), but remains strong. Overall, the findings indicate the instruments' suitability for research or practical applications.

The heteroscedasticity test, performed using the Glejser technique, shows that the significance values for all independent variables above the 0.05 level. This result indicates that the residuals lack systematic variation, demonstrating the absence of heteroscedasticity in the regression model. As a consequence, the model satisfies one of the critical requirements for successful linear regression analysis.

Furthermore, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was used to determine if the data had a normal distribution. The test yielded an Asymp. Sig. value of 0.065, which exceeds the standard alpha level of 0.05. This shows that the null hypothesis of normality cannot be rejected, implying that the data is regularly distributed. These diagnostic tests, taken together, provide evidence for the validity and robustness of the regression analysis used in this work.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was performed and the results are show below.

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Variable	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Stad.Error	Beta	T	Sig
Constant	10.251	2.447		2.345	0.18
WC	-0.601	0.081	-0.508	5.567	0.000
CJS	-0.508	0.072	0.418	5.438	0.001
JRST	0.721	0.084	0.627	5.278	0.000
RCE	-0.421	0.083	-0.411	4.621	0.001
MSS	0.781	0.081	-0.672	5.391	0.000
PDA	-0.631	0.071	-0.532	3.289	0.000
PSC	0.792	0.063	0.681	3.290	0.000

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression Results

The study shows that Psychosocial Safety Climate (PSC) (β = 0.681) and Job Risk and Safety Threats ((β = 0.627) are the most significant positive predictors of psychological safety. This suggests that when employees feel protected and perceive a real commitment to their safety, their psychological well-being increases. However, the existing system, in which security professionals frequently face armed threats without access to guns, jeopardizes both physical and psychological safety.These findings imply that a safe working environment and a culture that encourages psychological support are crucial for improving employee well-being in private security environments. Compensation and Job Security (CJS) (β = 0.418) demonstrate a positive association, showing that fair compensation and secure job circumstances contribute significantly to psychological safety.

However, Working Conditions (WC) (β = -0.508) and Role Clarity and Expectations (RCE) (β = -0.411) are negative predictors. Poor physical settings and imprecise job objectives appear to jeopardize psychological safety among security staff. Surprisingly, PDA (β = -0.532) and MSS (β = -0.672) had negative relationships. These unexpected outcomes might reflect:

- A potential discrepancy between perceived autonomy/support and real employee requirements.
- Managerial strategies are viewed as controlling rather than empowering.

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- Possible reverse-coded items or measurement errors influencing outcomes.

Discussion

The study found that job stress had a substantial impact on employee happiness and performance in Botswana's private security industry. Long working hours, poor salaries, and a lack of managerial assistance were the most common causes of high stress. Respondents regularly expressed emotional tiredness and low motivation, which had a direct influence on their job performance. Many cops were dissatisfied with their working circumstances, citing job uncertainty and inadequate recognition as major pressures. The research also revealed that stress increased absenteeism and decreased work engagement. Despite the enormous demand, organizational support mechanisms such as mental health care and training were limited. The findings are consistent with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) paradigm, indicating that insufficient resources enhance stress effects. Interestingly, police who had greater supervision and training reported somewhat higher levels of satisfaction. Overall, the findings highlight the critical need for organizational changes to combat occupational stress in this high-risk business. Based on the study's findings, numerous practical solutions are given to promote psychological safety, reduce job stress, and increase employee satisfaction and performance in Botswana's private security sector:

- Strengthen the Psychosocial Safety Climate: Organizations should foster a workplace culture that values psychological well-being. This involves clear communication, managerial transparency, and a visible commitment to employee mental health and safety.
- Review and enhance job risk and safety protocols: Given the high-risk nature of private security employment, particularly in situations where guards confront armed threats without being armed themselves, organizations should lobby for controlled access to defensive equipment (e.g., non-lethal weapons, protective gear) subject to tight training and compliance requirements. Deployment plans should also prioritize collaboration in high-risk zones.
- Improve job security and fair compensation: Employers should guarantee that employment contracts are solid and competitive. These elements directly contribute to psychological safety and job happiness.
- Reassess Managerial Support Structures: The negative relationship shown between MSS and psychological safety shows a potential imbalance in how assistance is provided. Managers should be trained in transformational leadership and supportive supervision, which empowers people rather than micromanaging them.

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- Refine the autonomy and development opportunities: Autonomy must be meaningful and not interpreted as desertion or over responsibility. Professional development programs should be well-structured, conveyed properly, and in line with individual professional goals.
- Improve role clarity and working conditions: Job descriptions should be concise, precise, and often updated. To decrease stress and burnout, working circumstances, including hours, surroundings, and expectations, must be examined on a continuous basis.
- Audit and Improve Measurement Tools: Future research and organizational evaluations should guarantee that instruments used to assess management support and autonomy are appropriately validated and unaffected by reverse-coded or unclear issues.
- Policy and Regulatory Engagement: Stakeholders, including government agencies, private security regulators, and industry groups, should collaborate to develop national safety standards, employee protection regulations, and training frameworks that reflect the reality encountered by private security professionals.

Conclusion

This study underlines the need of a secure and supportive work environment for psychological safety in Botswana's private security sector. A strong psychosocial safety environment, together with employment stability and fair compensation, has emerged as essential improvers of employee well-being and performance. These findings offer practical insights for organizational leaders seeking to reduce workplace stress and boost labor satisfaction in high-risk industries such as private security. Organizations and governments should reassess operational safety rules in the private security industry immediately. Advocating for restricted firearm access or non-lethal defensive guns (e.g., pepper spray, tasers) with strict training and licensing requirements is essential. There is also a need to increase physical protection techniques, such as the use of armored vests and team-based deployments in high-risk regions. This study covers fundamental issues about morale, work satisfaction, and performance, as well as the compromise to employee safety caused by a failure to link safety resources with real-world dangers.

One of the most important parts of this study is the context-specific analysis, which focuses on a relatively underexplored industry in Botswana. The study's focus on private security personnel produces actionable data that might inform targeted HR policy and management practices. However, the study showed unexpectedly unfavorable associations between managerial support and professional autonomy. These findings may point to underlying organizational misalignment or limitations in how support structures are perceived and implemented. Furthermore, the possibility of measurement bias or reverse-coded items cannot be ruled out, highlighting the necessity for more stringent inspection in future research.

In reality, the insights gained here may be utilized to reconsider organizational structures, fine-tune leadership training, and increase job clarity and autonomy frameworks in similar high-stress scenarios. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and qualitative approaches to further understand and assess these connections across time and across contexts.

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