



REMUNERATION LEVEL OF SECURITY GUARDS FROM SAMBURU COMMUNITY WORKING IN NAIROBI

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Abstract

This study investigated the remuneration level of security guards from Samburu Community working in Nairobi. The study adopted, as its theoretical framework, the Interests Theory of human rights as described by Raz. In examining these issues, the study looked at the following indicators, which provided evidence for granting or non-granting of employee rights: shelter, diet and investments made by the employees; existence of job contracts, insurance cover, retirement benefit plan and health cover; membership to a trade union; promotion at work and salary increment; and the nature of equipment and training for the job. The study involved all security guards from the Samburu community working in Nairobi as the population of study and individual security guards as the unit of analysis. Five areas of the city, that is, Westlands/Kabete, Lavington/Kangemi/Waithaka/Muthaiga/Thika Road, Karen/Lang'ata, South C/South B and Embakasi, were marked out as the places from which the study sample was taken. The study adopted a survey design, and data was collected through questionnaires, which were applied to 200 security guards who had been randomly selected from 5 administrative clusters in Nairobi. The findings indicated that security guards were poorly remunerated. It recommended that the government of Kenya enforce a minimum salary of at least at the level of maximum un-taxable income and proper job contraction for security guards.

Key terms: Benefits, employee, employer, labour, remuneration.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kenya's labour laws are underpinned by the International Labour Convention (ILC), which is safeguarded by the International Labour Organization (ILO), the arm of the United Nations Organization (UNO), which deals with labour issues on the global front (ILO, 2017). ILO was birthed in 1919 through the Treaty of Versailles, which formed the League of Nations, with the aim of addressing the issue of social reform in the period immediately after World War I (ILO, 2017). In the year 1946, ILO became the first specialised agency associated with UNO, which was formed after the collapse of the League of Nations in the wake of the Second World War (ILO, 2022). ILO constitutes of workers' and employers' representatives, who participate equally in shaping the organisation's policies and programmes. The key objectives of ILO are the promotion and realisation of standards as well as basic principles and rights at work, the enhancement of social protection for all, the creation of more significant opportunities for decent employment, and the enhancement of cooperation and dialogue on labour-related issues. Through the annual ILO International Labour Conference, minimum international labour standards and policies are set; these standards and policies come to be adopted by member states through judicial enactments, whereby they come to constitute the bulk of the labour laws for the member states. ILO has 185 member states, of whom Kenya is a member (ILO, 2022).

The Employment Act (2022) stipulates that employer and employee need to have an employment contract stipulating the length and the nature of engagement, with the remuneration level matching the nature of the employee's engagement; the employee should be accorded sick leave, annual leave as well as other types of leave as situations may demand, during which the employee is entitled to full remuneration; the employer should provide for, either in substance or in monetary form, proper accommodation and feeding for the employee; a health care programme and an insurance plan should also be put in place by the employer. The Work Injuries Act (2007) obligates the employer to see to it that the employee is insured and that registers and records pertaining to his engagement are kept. The employee has the right to compensation.

This study investigates the extent to which the welfare of security guards from the Samburu Community working in Nairobi is catered for in light of the requirements of labour laws. The literature reviewed revealed that documented information concerning the quality of life of security guards from Samburu Community working in Nairobi, which is underpinned by their terms of employment and their working conditions, is not available. Therefore, there is a lack of a basis for addressing their plight regarding employment terms and conditions. This study endeavours to bring to light the terms of employment and the working conditions of security guards from the Samburu Community working in Nairobi in view of the regulations about the same, which are laid out in the labour laws of Kenya.

According to Daddie et al. (2018), high-level employees enjoy employee welfare benefits such as health insurance, housing schemes and pension plans, among others. However, the welfare scenario for employees from disadvantaged backgrounds, like security guards from nomadic pastoralist communities, may be different. Accordingly, this study investigates the remuneration level of security guards from the Samburu Community working in Nairobi.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Korir and Kipkebut (2016) investigated how total reward programmes were related to employee engagement and whether the rewards programme had any association with the organisation's

performance. The study was carried out using a survey design involving a university staff member in Nakuru, Kenya. The study found that performance was enhanced when rewards were favourable to the employees, and managers performed better when they were facilitated to enhance the engagement and commitment of those under their supervision with performance rewards. This study was carried out over a wide population that cut across different continents, so it could not capture characteristics pertinent to minority employee groups. The current study confines itself to Nairobi City and examines remuneration issues involving security guards from the Samburu community, a minority group.

Koskey and Sakataka (2015) also did a study on the effect of rewards on employee engagement and commitment at Rift Valley Bottlers Company. The researcher opines that rewards in many forms have a direct influence on the employees' welfare. For instance, medical insurance coverage enables employees to access medical treatment promptly and thus reduces absenteeism levels.

Proper and health-promoting conditions at the workplace are important employee rights. Markey et al. (2013) examined the level of job satisfaction of employees in relation to the condition at work, using the intention to quit a job as the indicator of the level of satisfaction. They investigated the characteristics of a good environment in a workplace from the employee's point of view and the impact of policies for a good workplace environment on employee job satisfaction; they indicated the absence of stress and being informed on important decisions as being the key ones. The research adopted a multi-method design involving survey and case study approaches, using questionnaires as the research tools. It found that employees who perceived the working conditions as good had a high level of job satisfaction, so they did not intend to quit, while the majority of those who wanted to quit their jobs thought the workplace was not good enough to work in. This study looked at the issue of job satisfaction mainly for those who worked in offices and who were at employment levels, which made it necessary for them to be informed on important decisions affecting the workplace. Therefore, the findings may not apply to non-office workers and to those who may not necessarily need to be consulted or informed when decisions are being made with regard to their level of job satisfaction. This study will bridge this gap by investigating the working conditions of security guards whose work is outside the office and whose line of duty is not directly related to the functions of the premises they guard.

Hameed and Amjad (2019) examined the relationship between office design and employee productivity for bank workers in Abbottabad, Pakistan, in which they analysed the design of the bank offices, the features that employees valued at the place of work, and deemed to determine whether office design really affected employee productivity, and the impact of office design on employee productivity. A sample of 21 bank branches out of a total of 31 branches in Abbottabad was selected, and 105 employees from the sample branches were interviewed through a questionnaire. Furniture, noise level, lighting, temperature and spatial arrangement were examined. The research showed that office design had an impact on employee productivity, and among the factors examined, lighting was found to be the most important critical factor that affected employee productivity. This study brought to focus the importance of a proper working environment with regard to employee productivity. However, it confined itself to the environment in the bank, where all employees are housed under the same roof. It, therefore, could not provide information that could relate to cases where employees worked in different buildings within the same compound or even outdoors. The current study will examine the working conditions of security guards, whose work is mainly outdoors and in a variety of environments.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The data used in the study was both quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative data was gathered through questionnaires, which were constructed in such a way that they captured different kinds of information that would be required to address the objectives of the study. For that reason, both open-ended and closed questionnaires were used. A pilot study was carried out to assess the content-related validity of the questionnaires before the actual research was carried out. In this study, frequency distribution tables were used to analyse the data. The researcher initially carried out a reconnaissance visit to the study areas, listing all the security guards from nomadic pastoralist communities according to the five clusters of administrative areas described above. From these clusters, a sample of 200 security guards was selected through random sampling. Random sampling gives each individual in the study population an equal opportunity to be selected: this creates a situation where the sample is a true representation of the study population (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The study involved all security guards from the Samburu community working in Nairobi as the population of study and individual security guards as the unit of analysis. Five areas of the city, that is, Westlands/Kabete, Lavington/Kangemi/Waithaka/Muthaiga/Thika Road, Karen/Lang'ata, South C/South B and Embakasi, were marked out as the places from which the study sample was taken from each of these areas. Thus, clustering was used as a prelude step in selecting the study sample. The study was carried out within Nairobi City. Nairobi City is the capital city of the nation of Kenya, the economic powerhouse of the Eastern and Central African region. Nairobi City is the most populous city in East Africa, with a population of over three million people. It is located in the South-Central part of the country, at an altitude of 1680 m above sea level. It is 1.2833° South of the Equator and 36.8167° East of the Greenwich Meridian. The research adopted a survey design to investigate the welfare of security guards from nomadic pastoralist communities working in Nairobi.

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Remuneration Level of Security Guards

The first objective of the study was to investigate the remuneration level of Samburu security guards working in Nairobi. In this regard, the security guards were interviewed with the aim of capturing data on the amount of money they were paid per month and their lifestyle in relation to feeding, housing financial undertakings and management. Table 1 shows the general remuneration characteristics of the security guards:

Table 1: General Remuneration Characteristics of the Security Guards

Average Salary (Kshs)	7,500.00
Lowest Salary (Kshs)	5,000.00
Highest Salary (Kshs)	15,000.00

As the table indicates, the average monthly salary of the security guards was Kshs. 7,500.00, with the highest paid receiving Kshs. 15,000.00 and the lowest paid Kshs. 5,000.00.

Table 2 shows the security guards' lifestyle characteristics, which were underpinned by their earning levels:

Table 2: Lifestyle Characteristics of the Security Guards

Lifestyle Characteristic	Description
Main diet	Ugali/Sukuma

Average meals a day	One
Average type of residence	All-iron sheet single rooms in slum areas
Average No. of guards sharing a room	Four
Major financial expenses	Feeding, medical expenses, school fees for siblings
Saving habit	Non-existent because money is not enough

From this table, the indication is that the security guards' salaries could only afford them a single meal per day, and the cheapest at that, with the cheapest form of housing in the city, in the cheapest areas (the slums). Basic requirements of feeding, medical care and education took the bulk of their earnings, and as such, the security guards were not left with anything they could save. Table 3 shows the kind of personal financial development projects in which the security guards were engaged and the numbers corresponding to the different kinds of engagement:

Table 3: Personal Financial Development Projects of the Security Guards

Type Engagement	Number of Security Guards	Percentage
Buy livestock	12	6%
Getting married	65	32.5%
None	123	61.5%

From the table, it is evident that most of the security guards (61.5%) did not engage in any personal financial project. For those who did, the majority, 32.5 per cent, were engaged in the process of getting married; this would financially be a liability because, though a positive development, because of its higher and continuous demand on their income. Only 6 per cent of the security guards engaged in projects, which would enhance their economic well-being. These results are expressed in the pie chart below, where 'None' takes the largest chunk, followed by 'Getting married', with 'Buy livestock' being the smallest:

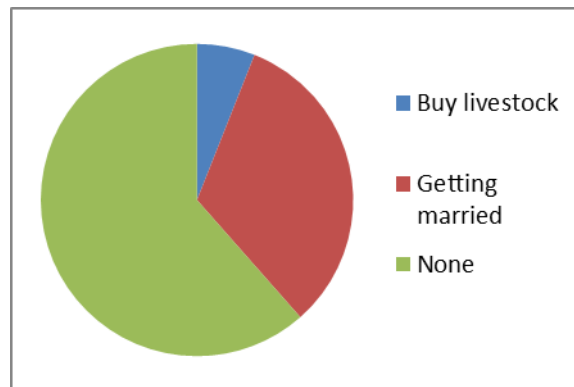


Chart 1: Personal Financial Development Projects of the Security Guards

When questioned about their salary and allowance level features and how they viewed them, the security guards responded as follows:

Table 4: Salary and Allowance Level Characteristics of Security Guards

Salary/Allowance Characteristics	YES	Percentage	NO	Percentage
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Monthly salary of at least Kshs.15,000.00	15	7.5%	185	92.5%
Housing or house allowance	38	19%	162	81%
Annual salary increment	55	27.5%	145	72.5%
Is salary enough?	2	1%	198	99%
Got salary increment in the last 2 years	64	32%	136	68%
Was the salary increment satisfactory?	2	1%	198	99%
Can you handle emergencies/risks adequately	11	5.5%	189	94.5%

The results indicate that though the highest monthly salary paid to the security guards was Kshs. 15,000.00, only a small percentage, that is, 7.5 per cent were being paid at this level. The rest of them, that is, 92.5 per cent, received much lower salaries, hence, the low average monthly salary of Kshs. 7,500.00 indicated in Table 1. Consequently, a vast majority of the security guards (99%) indicated that what they were paid was not enough to meet their needs. As such, only 5.5 per cent were in a position to adequately address emergencies and risks, while 94.5 per cent were not in that position. However, a relatively higher percentage, 27.5 per cent, were getting annual salary increments, while an even higher percentage, 32 per cent, had gotten such an increase over a period of two years prior to the research. However, only 1 per cent of them were satisfied with the increment, with 99 per cent (among them being those who did not get any increment) not. Only 19 per cent of the security guards were provided with housing or a house allowance on top of their salaries, while 81 per cent got money for their housing from their salaries. These results are represented in the column chart below:

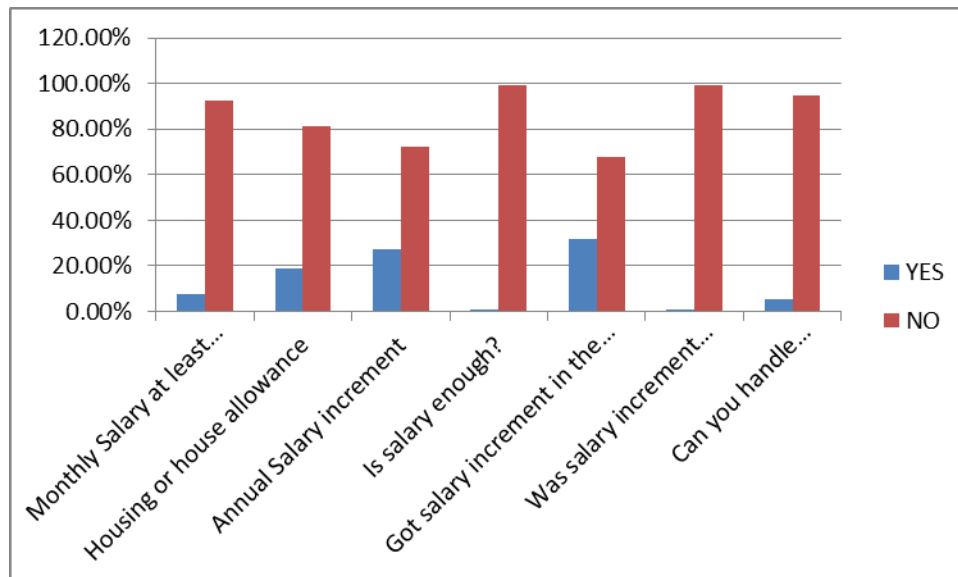


Chart 2: Salary and Allowance Level Characteristics of Security Guards

Discussion

Remuneration Level of Security Guards The study found that, on average, security guards could only afford the bare necessities of life, living on a single, cheap meal per day. They had poor and inadequate housing, with up to four men sharing a single room; their other major expenses apart from food and shelter were medical care and education. 61.5 per cent of them did not engage in any personal financial projects, and 32.5% invested in getting married and maintaining the family. Only 6 per cent engaged in

some form of economic development project. This indicated that the salaries that the security guards earned were not sufficient to meet their basic, secondary and tertiary needs.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: Security guards were poorly remunerated; their salaries were not sufficient to meet their basic, secondary and tertiary needs.

Recommendation: Due to poor remuneration, the right of security guards to dignity and freedom to pursue happiness was greatly undermined. To restore this dignity and freedom, the Government of Kenya, through the Ministry of Labour, should enforce a minimum salary for security guards, at least at the level of maximum untaxable income.

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