

The nature and adequacy of equipment used by security guards from Samburu community working in Nairobi

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Abstract

The study assessed the nature and the adequacy of equipment which security guards from the Samburu community working in Nairobi have for their jobs. The issue was employee workplace conditions. In examining this issue, the study looked at the nature of equipment and training for the job, which provided evidence for granting or non-granting employee rights. The research used 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 results were presented in tables of numbers and percentages of the sample interviewed, as well as column charts. The findings indicated that security guards were inadequately equipped for their job. The study concluded that security guards were inadequately equipped for their jobs, and this undermined their productivity and job satisfaction. It also recommended that the government, through the parliament, come up with legislation that would prohibit the engagement of security guards outside the employment of a duly registered security company. That way, it will be possible to monitor issues of workplace conditions and equipment issues pertaining to security guards.

Key terms: Benefits, employee, employer, labour, terms of employment.

INTRODUCTION

In Kenya, nomadic pastoralist communities are found in Eastern and North-Eastern counties, Northern counties of the Coastal region, and the Northern and Southern counties of the Rift Valley. The major communities found in these areas are the Samburu, Maasai, Turkana, Borana and Somali (Nyariki & Amwata, 2019). There are several factors which contribute to this preference. First, the harsh, semi-arid climatic conditions of the regions they occupy ensure that they start off life and live it out hardened, a necessary quality for the work of a security guard. Secondly, the nomadic pastoralist livelihood of the people means that they have to move into the wilderness with their livestock, where they encounter wild animals such as lions, leopards, hyenas, etc, all of which prey on their livestock. They have to defend their livestock, and this means developing stamina to ward off the predators or kill them- the Maasai are known for their prowess in killing lions. As a result, men from nomadic pastoralist communities are very bold, a quality that makes them highly suited as security guards.

Thirdly, the nomadic pastoralist lifestyle of the communities ensures minimal attainment in formal education for most of the men. Consequently, they cannot secure employment opportunities in the urban areas, which require specialised education or at least some appreciable level of formal educational achievement. This relegates them to employment as security guards, one of the low cadre occupations. For that reason, this study will focus on Samburu security guards working in Nairobi to represent all other nomadic pastoralist communities. The purpose of this study is to investigate the welfare of security guards from nomadic pastoralist communities working in Nairobi in light of the provisions made by Kenya's labour laws. Kenya's labour laws are underpinned by the International Labour Convention (ILC), which is safeguarded by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the arm of the United Nations Organisation (UNO) which deals with labour issues on the global front (ILO, 2022).

Fundamentally, and irrespective of personal attributes or background characteristics, every human being has rights called human rights (Addison, 2020). Human rights are fundamental moral guarantees possessed by

people irrespective of nationality or cultural background (Zehra et al., 2022). 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 as far as employment terms and conditions are concerned. 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 clearly laid out in the labour laws of Kenya.

The findings of this study will help the government of Kenya address the issue of observance of the rights of security guards from the Samburu Community working in Nairobi pertaining to their terms of employment and job conditions as enshrined in labour laws. This will help in improving the quality of their lives and their future prospects for social upward mobility. Accordingly, this study seeks access to the nature and the adequacy of equipment which security guards from the Samburu community working in Nairobi have for their job.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Equipment for Job

Truitt (2017) investigated the relationship between employee training experiences, their attitude towards their jobs, and their proficiency in them. A survey design was used in the investigation, using a convenience or purposive sampling procedure to get the research sample from the population of business professionals from a university and three profit organisations. A research questionnaire was mailed to the respondents. The study found that a strong relationship existed between the quality of training of the respondents and their feeling of importance about their jobs; thus, training enhanced job proficiency. This study centred on business professionals who were likely to be self-driven in seeking chances for training; its findings, therefore, might not apply to those who would wait to be facilitated for training by their

employers. The current study will focus on low-cadre employees whose chances to train may only be availed by their employers due to lack of exposure and financial limitations.

In a series of case study researches by the USA's General Services Administration (GSA) to determine the best practices in workplace equipment (Sindelar, 2006), it was found that employee productivity and job satisfaction could be greatly enhanced by equipping them adequately and more gain could be made through proper utilisation of available workspace and resources if the employees were equipped with appropriate knowledge to that effect. This study related to the general American workforce without going deeper into specific employee categories and their equipment needs. The present investigation will close this gap by examining the issue of equipment for jobs with regard to a specific employee category, that is, security guards.

METHODOLOGY

The research adopted a survey design to investigate the welfare of security guards from nomadic pastoralist communities working in Nairobi. 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 Comity 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 1.28330 South of the Equator and 36.81670 East of the Greenwich Meridian.

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 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 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.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Nature and Adequacy of Equipment for Security Guards

The objective of this study was to assess the nature and adequacy of equipment that security guards from the Samburu Community are working in Nairobi. To pursue this objective, the security guards were interviewed on workplace conditions and the provisions they had for their work. The results are shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Workplace condition and job equipment for security guards

	YES	Percentage	NO	Percentage
Work equipment- e.g. uniform	18	9%	182	91%
Food work at	28	14%	172	86%
access to drinking water	163	81.5%	37	18.5%
Is drinking water clean	22	11%	178	89%
Accessible to Toilet facilities	145	72.5%	55	27.5%

Table 1 shows that only 9 per cent of the security guards were provided with job equipment such as uniforms. The indication is that the majority of the security guards (91%) had to devise their own means of acquiring job equipment and worked without any dress code. Only 14 per cent of the security guards were provided with food at their workplace. 18.5 per

cent of them did not even have access to drinking water at their places of work, and even for those who had, there was an 89 per cent indication of unavailability of clean drinking water. Finally, 27.5 per cent of the security guards did not have access to toilet facilities at their places of work. These findings are captured in the column chart below:

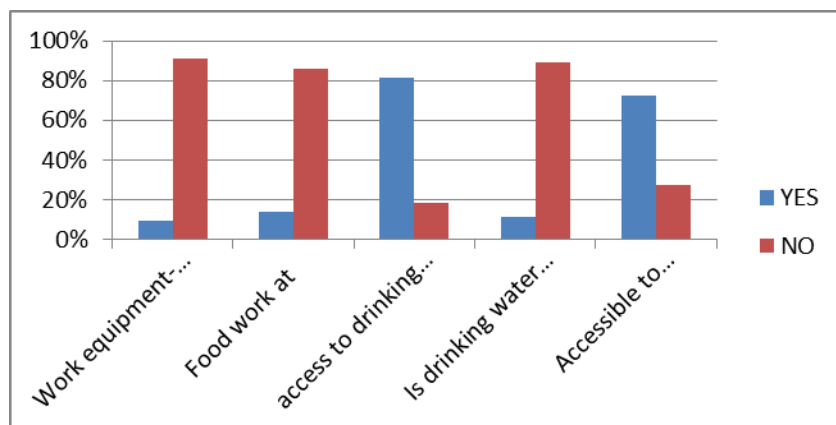


Chart 1: Workplace Condition and Job Equipment for Security Guards

Discussion

Nature and Adequacy of Equipment for Security Guards

The study found that security guards were poorly equipped for their job, with only 9 per cent being provided with uniforms for their work. Other facilities were equally found to be inadequate: provision of food at work was low, at 14 per cent, and a significant percentage (18.5%) did not have access to drinking water at their places of work, while the majority of those who had the access (89%) could not get clean drinking water. Worse still, 27.5 per cent did not have access to toilet facilities at their places of work. The existence of such conditions contravened the Employment (Amendment) Bill (2022), which provides for proper feeding (either in substance or in monetary form), as well as the Factories Act (Cap. 514), which stipulates the provision of safety and health of employees at the workplace. Poor equipment and

inadequate facilities at their workplace were key factors in undermining productivity and job satisfaction for the security guards. According to Sindelar (2006), adequately equipping employees enhances their productivity and job satisfaction. So, for the security guards, the reverse was true: being poorly equipped, their job satisfaction was low.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion: Security guards were inadequately equipped for their jobs, and this undermined their productivity and job satisfaction.

Recommendation: The government, through the parliament, should come up with legislation which will prohibit the engagement of security guards outside the employment of a duly registered security company. That way, it will be possible to monitor issues of workplace conditions and equipment issues pertaining to security guards.

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