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Precarious work : a case study of security guards in Johannesburg.

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2012-06-29
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/11564

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CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The aim of this research is to explore the work and life experiences of private security guards in Johannesburg. Drawing on recent literature on the precarious nature of work, the study aims to contribute to our understanding of precariousness in post-apartheid South Africa. The existing literature on the precariat offers very little concrete information about the subjective experiences of workers in the workplace and living conditions. This exploratory study looks at private security guards in Johannesburg to explore the social processes involved in the sphere of production (workplace) and that of reproduction (household) (Luxton and Bezanson, 2006:3). The concept of precariousness is widely contested and the social processes that constitute it differ among analysts. Three authors in point are Standing (2011), Barchiesi (2011a) and Candeias (2004). While Standing views precariousness as primarily concerned with employment insecurity, Barchiesi and Candeias go beyond employment, exploring precariousness as constituted by the interaction between the workplace and the household. In this view, precariousness is an existential and social condition which people experience across their life course and their entire social fabric and not just insecure employment (Barchiesi, 2011a). Precariousness is a double process argues Candeias constituted by the 'contrast between the precarization of labour on the one hand, and the precarization of social reproduction on the other' (Candeias, 2004:1). Candeias' approach to precariousness takes into account social reproduction, which Bezanson and Luxton (2006:3) view as 'processes involved in maintaining and reproducing people, specifically the labouring population, and their labour power on a daily and generational basis. It involves the provision of food, clothing, shelter, basic safety and health care, along with the development and transmission of knowledge, social values and

cultural practices and the construction of individual and collective identities' (Elson, 1998 and Picchio, 1992 cited in Luxton and Bezanson, 2006:3). There is widespread consensus among labour analysts, Standing, Barchiesi and Candeias included, that neo-liberal globalisation has fundamentally changed the nature of work 'leading to a fragmented and uneven labour market' consisting of work that is 'often precarious, lack benefits and have low wages' (Webster, 2006:1). Webster, Bezuidenhout and Lambert (2008: vii) analyse the dislocating experience suffered by workers under globalisation. These experiences have undermined the sense of security of millions around the world. A person's sense of security not only entails job security or insecurity (not knowing whether one's job will be available tomorrow) as Standing correctly points out, but also how they will sustain and maintain the household, feed and clothe their children, and prospects of improving one's living conditions. The above point is best illustrated by a perspective that links work and social reproduction (Peck, 1996:39, cited in Benya, 2009:34).

The concept of decent work, which originates from the International Labour Organization (ILO), is on one level an attempt to ensure some level of social security for the labouring masses (Ghai, 2002:7). However, Barchiesi argues that neo-liberal capitalist globalisation has permanently undermined the feasibility of realising decent work (Barchiesi, 2011a). While offering a radical critique of decent work and the unsuitable prevailing social order to realise it, Barchiesi does not give a clear picture of the kind of social conditions he thinks will favour the realisation of greater security and stability of employment and social reproduction. He does not offer a practical alternative.

The private security industry (PSI) is one of the fastest growing and job creating industries in South Africa (Conradie, 2011:2), but very little is known about the subjective

experiences of work and how some security guards live. The study seeks to establish, through empirical research, how we ought to understand precariousness in post apartheid South Africa by exploring the social experiences of private security guards in Johannesburg. An exploration of the subjective experiences of private security guards in Johannesburg will be guided by the nine themes of decent work and other themes emerging from the data, which form part of the day-to-day lived experiences of private security guards in Johannesburg.

In South Africa, there are over 20 000 registered private security companies (PSC) and over 1.3-million registered security guards. Of the 20 000, 8 828 are active and over 3 202 are operating in Gauteng. Of the 1.3-million registered security guards, 411 109 are currently actively employed in the sector (PSIRA, 2011). The number of registered active security guards (411 109) is more than double the South African Police Force, 'which by the end of March 2011 had an estimated 194 000 active officials in the country' (Hartley, 2011:3). The tremendous growth of South Africa's PSI does not construct a situation of 'South African exceptionalism'. The expansion of the PSI is a worldwide phenomenon. The international statistics on the PSI indicate that India is the largest with over 7-million security guards. Japan on the other hand has almost doubled the size of its PSI, growing from 460 000 in 2003 to over 750 000 in 2011 (SIA interview, 2011).

The Private Security Regulatory Authority (PSIRA) is the main regulatory body in the industry whose diverse responsibilities include the collection of information and statistics about the security sector in South Africa. According to its annual reports the industry has grown by over 300% from 1997 to 2011. Registered and active security guards totalled 115 331 in 1997, 387 273 in 2010 and 411 109 in 2011. Over 36% of private security guards are concentrated in Gauteng (PSIRA, 2011).

The PSI however has a history of violating worker rights. A study of G4S in Mozambique showed how companies often ignore regulations and exploit workers (Daniele, 2007). Jackson Simon of the South African Transport and Allied Workers Union (SATAWU), which is the biggest union in the industry representing over 40 000 security guards said that 'Group 4 Securicor [G4S] doesn't always respect workers' fundamental rights or even the laws of the country where it operates. In an industry characterised by poor working conditions, low wages and rampant casualisation, Group 4 has earned a reputation here in South Africa as one of the worst employers' (Simon, cited in Afrol News, 2010). The PSIRA annual report of 2004/2005 indicates that 'PSCs underpay workers and deploy untrained and unregistered officers'. In South Africa, the history of the PSI was interlinked with the prevailing violent social order established by apartheid, which linked class and race. The class-race intersection has not only shaped the nature of work in the past but also continues to be reflected through racialized 'material inequalities' today (Seeking, 2005:20 cited in Habib and Bentley, 2008). The PSI reflected this as it was predominantly white owned and managed, while black watchmen, with *knobkerries* and dogs did the guarding. It has for decades remained a reservoir of gross exploitation and a pinnacle of the violation of worker rights. Watchmen experienced like many other black employees 'wage labour as a reality of humiliation, violence, poverty, uncertainty, and the denial of basic social provisions' (Barchiesi, 2011a:2). Watchmen worked 365 days a year, endured long working hours without leave, benefits, no 13th cheque, low wages, virtually no worker rights and no social dialogue (Barret, 1993: and Forrest, 1993). Jobs were created and thus a source of some income, but black workers experienced employment under appalling conditions marked by the violence of abuse, indignity and little or no prospect of decent work.

A central aim of the decent work agenda is the creation of jobs of acceptable quality (Ghai, 2002). The history of the PSI in South Africa suggests that there exists a significant decent work deficit. The missing link in the history of work in the PSI in South Africa is that relatively little insights are available reflecting upon how security guards themselves as social actors feel and experience working and living conditions.

Studies that have looked at worker experiences have largely focused on domestic workers (Cock, 1980; Bozzoli and Nkotsoe, 1991; Ally, 2009; Phillip, 2011), mineworkers (Moodie and Ndatshe, 1994), industrial workers (Webster, 1985) and manufacturing (Webster, 1985; Webster, Bezuidenhout and Lambert, 2008). Research that has been done on the security industry has largely focused on profiling the sector (Rees, 2011), linking the growth of the sector to the nature of crime in the country (Cock, 2004), unionisation trends in the sector (Nakanyane, 1999), accountability of South Africa's PSI and challenges of regulation (Berg, 2007) and reporting unlawful employer practices (PSIRA, 2004/05). However, the working conditions and worker experiences of private security guards remain, with the exception of a study of the 2006 security strike by Tumi Makgetla, unexplored (Makgetla, 2007).

In the first part of this chapter I locate the origins of the concept of decent work, defining the concept and focusing on its significance in the South African policy discourse of job creation. The idea of decent work not only places emphasise on job creation (employment opportunities), but also the quality of jobs (social dialogue, worker rights and social security). Within the South African job creation discourse, decent work is seen as a precursor to achieving a dignified life (Barchiesi, 2011b). Decent work is seen as essential to the welfare of workers, family stability, community peace and economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and employment (DWCP, 2010:5). An investigation that seeks to establish how private security

guards themselves experience work is not only necessary but crucial to our understanding of precariousness in post-apartheid South Africa.

In the second part, I discuss the idea of the precariat and precariousness. The precariat and preciousness have not only become buzzwords in industrial sociology but are also heavily contested. The concept basically highlights the 'transformation of work and livelihood, how they are being eroded and becoming more insecure, forming no solid basis for desirable stability of employment and life' (Standing, 2011). Moreover the concept not only highlights these perpetual fragmenting transformations but also the 'direction in which global economic security is moving in the 21st century' (Randle, 2011:172), particularly under 'market hegemonic order' of neo-liberalism and its labour market flexibility prescriptions (Kenny, 2003: 102-3). Security and stability of employment and livelihood are for millions becoming an imaginary.

I consider three recent publications on the subject of work and precariousness with the aim of providing an understanding of what the concept means and to whom it refers. I consider Guy Standing (2011), Franco Barchiesi (2011a) and Mario Candeias (2004). I also include Peter Waterman (2005) and discuss the various objections to the idea of decent work.

Decent work: South Africa's policy discourse of employment creation

"The labour process is the everlasting nature-imposed condition of human existence" (Marx, 1867:290, cited in Dillion, 2010).

Work is one of the most universal conditions of human existence. "Work is a social activity," Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout (2003:7) argue, where an individual or group puts in effort during a specific time and space, sometimes with the expectation of monetary or other kinds of rewards, or with no expectation of reward, but with a sense of obligation to others.

From this perspective, 'social reproduction', which includes those activities largely carried out by women in the household, care work, cooking, cleaning etc which is usually unpaid is viewed as work.

The concept of social reproduction, embedded in a feminist political economy, "builds on and deepens debates about domestic labour and women's economic roles in capitalist societies" (Luxton and Bezanson, 2006:3). The concept of social reproduction is 'commonly used and cited as a core element of feminist theory more generally' (Luxton and Bezanson, 2006:35).

"Feminists use social reproduction to refer to the activities and attitudes, behaviours and emotions, responsibilities and relationships directly involved in the maintenance of life on a daily basis, and inter-generationally. Among other things, social reproduction includes food, clothing, and shelter made available for immediate consumption, the ways in which the care and socialisation of children are provided, the care of the infirm and elderly, and the social organization of sexuality. Social reproduction can thus be seen to include various kinds of work- mental, manual, and emotional- aimed at providing the historically and socially, as well as biologically, defined care necessary to maintain existing life and to reproduce the next generation" (Leslett and Brenner, 1989: 382, cited in Luxton and Bezanson, 2006:35–6).

Peck (1996:39, cited in Benya, 2009:34) argues: "[T]he sphere of production and the sphere of social reproduction are both separate and connected. They are separate in the sense that they each have their own structures of dominance along with their own distinctive rhythms and tendencies, but they are also related in the sense that each conditions and interacts with the other". He further argues that the division between production and reproduction is artificial. Reproduction is crucial to production. For him, "the gendered construction of domestic labour is

reflected in men's waged work as well as women's ... Thus, analyses of work done by men should always pose the question, 'who does the laundry?'... the way in which these jobs are constructed requires that people who fill them have someone else look after them" (Peck, 1996, cited in Benya, 2009:119).

Work includes informal sector activities that are largely unregulated. Work is an activity that has to be understood within a given social setting. (Webster, Buhlungu and Bezuidenhout, 2003:7).

The term 'work' as deployed in this paper is broader than what is usually understood as wage labour or employment. It is an attempt to recognise and embrace all forms of work, not just those covered by employment. The word 'decent' in the context of the ILO was not meant as a slogan or mantra but as a practical and realisable policy goal (Standing, 2008:370). However, Standing remains very sceptical of the concept and its intentions, especially from an organizational view of the ILO. From the onset the notion of decent work has faced some challenges, Standing points these out. Firstly, 'decency is a normative concept. The problem with the term from the onset was its inherent vagueness – to some this was seen as an advantage while to others it left too much room for flabby platitudes' (Standing, 2008:208 cited in Webster, 2009: 3).

The former director general of the ILO, Juan Somavia (ILO, 1999) outlined three principles underlying the notion of decent work. Labour, he argued is not simply a commodity, which like any other commodity on the market can be bought and sold. Rather, it is "first and foremost human activity, which cannot be reduced to something that can merely be bought and sold. Second, the notion of decent work has to be context based, constructed or defined on the

premise established by people themselves within their social context. This is because decent work in third world countries and in first world countries is not the same" (Somavia, 2004: 5-6, cited in Webster, 2009:4). The Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) of the ILO serve as vehicles through which decent work can be adopted in various countries based on their specific socio-economic climate. It was drafted and adopted in 2010 through the partnership of government, business, labour and the community or civil society through the institution of social dialogue, the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) of 1994 (DWCP, 2011).

Third, 'Work can be like this for some people and like that for others', but often becomes part of our identity and a fundamental source of meaning, particularly when considering our contribution to society (Svendsen, 2008:29). 'Work is a source of dignity and it is linked to a person's sense of identity and self-worth' (Somavia, 2004: 5-6, cited in Webster, 2009:4).). The social value of work is realised not only by the employed, but also by those in their community. Besides the economic multipliers that mainstream economists usually focus on, there are also numerous social multipliers derived from work and job creation (Webster, 2011:166). These include 'decreased crime, enhanced family and community cohesion; strengthened security; better education, healthcare and childcare' (Forstater, 2006, cited in Webster 2010:166).

At the 87th session of the ILO conference of June 1999, Somavia proposed decent work should be promoted and made a core priority of the ILO (Somavia, 1999 cited in Webster, 2010). He stated: "The primary goal of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work, in conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity" (ILO, 1999:3).

Somavia's statement highlights four elements of decent work: employment, social security, workers' rights and social dialogue. The first refers to various types of work and has 'both quantitative and qualitative dimensions' (Ghai, 2002:1). Decent work applies not only to workers in the formal economy but also includes those in the informal economy who are often "unregulated wage workers, the self-employed and home workers" (Ghai, 2002:1). Moreover, the concept makes reference to 'both adequate opportunities and remuneration for work (in cash or kind)' (Ghai, 2002:1). Central to decent work are important issues related to 'safety at work and healthy working conditions' (Ghai, 2002:1). The social security aspect of decent work is meant to shield against the risk of losing income (Ghai, 2002:1). Somavia further stated that; "Everybody-regardless of where they live-need a minimum level of social security and income security, defined according to the society's capacity of development" (ILO, 1999 cited in Ghai, 2002:1-2).

According to Ghai (2002:2) the first two components highlight opportunities and remuneration, security and conditions of work while the 'last two highlight the 'social relations of workers' (Ghai, 2002:2). Ghai (2002:2) also states that the notion of decent work embraces rights of workers at work – 'all those who work have rights at work' (Ghai, 2002:2). Rights are meant to protect workers from rights violating treatment by employers. Ghai (2002:2). Some of the basic rights include: freedom of association, non-discrimination at work, and the absence of forced labour and child labour in abusive conditions (ILO, 1999 cited in Ghai, 2002:7). It does not subscribe to the view, usually articulated by business, that rights make the labour market rigid and discourage employment. Labour rights are not viewed as a hurdle to the goal of the creation of decent employment (Webster, 2011). The ILO has conventions such as Conventions Nos. 87 and 89 (Ghai, 2002:24). The fact that 149 countries have ratified the two conventions

this, does not necessarily mean that the necessary conditions for freedom of association actually exist (Ghai, 2002:24). The fourth aspect is social dialogue and it is a very important worker right and 'refers to the rights of workers to engage in discussions with employers and authorities over matters bearing on work' (Ghai, 2002:2). The ILO itself is an organisation that operates on the basis of social dialogue and therefore genuinely believes in its merits and promotes it. Social dialogue is seen as a productive way of approaching and resolving workplace conflict (Webster, 2009:5).

"Social dialogue requires participation and freedom of association and is therefore an end in itself. It is also a means of ensuring conflict resolution, social equity and effective policy implementation. It is the means by which rights are defended, employment promoted and work secured. It is a source of stability at all levels, from the enterprise to society at large" (ILO, 1999a cited in Ghai, 2002:2).

Standing (2008:70) argues that this timidity and lack of coherence of the concept were demonstrated when efforts made to measure decent work were disparaged and discouraged. The concept, he argues was rejected by the employers on the Governing Body, notably the head of the International Organization of Employers (IOE) in Geneva. The one comprehensive attempt to measure decent work and present indexes for over a 100 countries' was abandoned when attacked by the employers, backed by the Workers' Department, without discussion (Standing, 2008:370). In 2008, ten indicators were agreed upon through a tripartite meeting of experts as a way of measuring decent work (ILO, 2008:1-3 cited in Webster, 2011a:166).

According to Ghai (2002), indicators are used to measure the extent to which a set of objectives or outcomes have been achieved. Their purpose is to assess the performance and evaluate progress in achieving a set of targets over a period of time. They are also useful in

cross-country comparisons and also in testing alternative hypothesis concerning the relationships among different components of decent work (Ghai, 2002:9-10). Ghai (2002:9-10) further notes that indicators should provide a direct measure of the specified objective. If the set objective is to measure social protection among private security guards in Johannesburg, the indicator should provide information on the number of people having adequate social protection or lack thereof which would highlight a decent work deficit.

However, there are many challenges in attempting to give a specific 'meaning to a general objective (Ghai, 2002:9-10). If we want to measure an aspect of decent work such as remunerative employment, the first step is to come up with an interpretation and then construct a proper or suitable indicator to measure it (Ghai, 2002:9-10). Often it is more difficult or costly to obtain a direct measure. An alternative is obtaining a measure that is indirect (Ghai, 2002:9-10). For instance, 'the nutritional status of children may be measured indirectly by their intake of various food nutrients. Or it may be measured indirectly, and more easily and cheaply, through weight or height for age' (Ghai, 2002:9-10). Ghai, (2002:9-10) states that a single or unique measure of the 'desired outcome, and a combination of several indicators will probably give a more accurate measure of a specified objective'. 'Quantitative indicators of social security may relate to the proportion of people receiving different types of benefit, while qualitative indicators concern the standard and effectiveness of services. Thus, it may be necessary to combine several indicators into an overall indicator or index, in order to give an accurate picture of working conditions' (Ghai, 2002:9–10). In the methodology section, I discuss how I triangulate qualitative and quantitative methods to gain a comprehensive picture of working conditions in the PSI in Johannesburg. The decent work indicators are listed in Table 1.

Table 1: decent work Indicators

Theme	**Example**
Employment opportunities	Measures the ease of finding employment in the PSI
Stability and security at work	Measures whether employees have contracts, what those contracts say and whether employees have job security
Wages	Measures earning levels and whether they are able to satisfactorily meet the workers' and his/her family's basic needs in that specific context
Decent hours	Measures the length of the working day, overtime and implication for the worker and his/her family
Work, family and personal life	Measures whether security guards have enough time to spend with their families and time for personal life given the nature of their work
Equal opportunity and treatment in employment	Measures discrimination in its multiple forms experienced by security guards in their place of work (employer practices)
Safe work environment	Measures whether or not security guards, are given protective equipment, protective clothing and feel safe at work
Social protection	Measures the extent of social security coverage for security guards, taking into consideration compulsory schemes such as provident fund, Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), medical aid and so on
Social dialogue and representation	Measures the degree or extent of voice/representation that security guards have in the workplace; this includes union density rate, number of enterprises belonging to employer organisations, and collective wage bargaining coverage

(Ghai, 2002:14)

The South African policy discourse

The notion of decent work is relatively new (ILO, 1999) but the values it embodies may be traced back to the South African Freedom Charter of 1955. The Freedom Charter espouses the values that inspired the struggle for liberation and democracy (Webster, 2009:12). These include the demand that:

"There shall be work and security!

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;

The state shall recognize the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall receive the same rights all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished"

(Freedom Charter, 1955).

In 1994, South Africa witnessed its first democratic election, which was contested by the African National Congress (ANC) and its alliance partners the Congress South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the South African Communist Party (SACP) on the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The vision embraced in the RDP policy document indicated a clear intention by the government to fulfil the principles enshrined in the Freedom Charter of 1955, a document that clearly embraces decent work (Webster, 2011a:168). The RDP formed

one of the processes to drive the transformation agenda of South Africa and address some of the multiple inequalities created by apartheid and still reflected in our society (Webster, 2011a:166).

The RDP identified key challenges facing South Africa such as housing, jobs, inadequate education and healthcare and an ailing economy. The document identifies job creation through public works programmes linked to the provision of basic services such as water, sanitation and roads. The key target was the rural and poor areas (Webster, 2011a:166). Job creation and the improvement of living standards through the provision of basic services were to be achieved simultaneously (Webster, 2011a:166). 'By 1999, 240 000 job opportunities had been created through road construction schemes, sewerage installations, water supply and sanitation' (Lodge, 2002, cited in Webster, 2011a:166).

According to Van der Walt (2001:1), the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy is a neo-liberal policy has led to the privatisation, liberalisation, deregulation and fiscal austerity. He noted that, neo-liberal policies have led to increased suffering of the working class who have to endure declining wages and benefits, increased unemployment and neglect of worker rights. For him, 'GEAR offers the working class nothing'.

The ANC and its alliance partners demonstrated their commitment to decent work and employment in the monumental Polokwane national conference of the ANC in 2007. This was also reflected in the leadership battle that saw Thabo Mbeki being replaced by Jacob Zuma (Webster, 2011a:170). Webster (2011a) highlights that decent work has become central to the government's job creation programme.

The New Growth Path (NGP), which was adopted in November 2010 as a 'framework for economic policy and the driver of the country's jobs strategy (NGP, 2010:1) reads 'we need

to grow both the size of the economy and the number of decent work opportunities it provides' (NGP, 2010:24). This policy position from government has received some degree of support with reservations from COSATU, the largest labour federation in South Africa. COSATU views this approach as a suitable one to address the country's triple crisis of unemployment, inequality and poverty. Decent work for COSATU is a crucial element of ensuring the overall wellbeing of the working class in particular. COSATU's draft discussion document of 11 September 2010 states that;

"Decent work means that the character of the growth path should be clearly biased towards the working class. It should be wage-led and redistributive-economic growth should raise wages in real terms and must improve income distribution. This means that economic growth should deliver lower rates of exploitation of labour, and increase access by the working class to basic goods and services, including sufficient time for working class heads of households to take care of their families and to play an active role in building social cohesion" (COSATU draft discussion document, 2011:23)

According to Webster (2011b) the discourse on decent work has three main approaches. He argues that the first, or official, approach is one that is embraced and adopted by labour organisations such as COSATU. This approach sees decent work as a positive and desirable goal to aspire to. The creation of decent work is viewed as an important element to the overall developmental objective of the country. Decent work and economic development are viewed as complimentary, leading to a virtuous circle. By making jobs more decent, you are also making them more productive (Webster, 2011b). The South African Clothing and Textile Workers Union's (SACTWU) position is that we need to

"Focus not only on wages but also includes a long-term, sustainable and human rights-based solution. It requires compliance with our laws, decent work, a focus on improving quality, diversifying product range and ensuring reliable delivery times" (cited in Webster, 2011b:7).

A potential limitation of this approach is that it neglects the fact that there are 'trade-offs between making jobs decent and simply creating jobs' (Webster, 2011b:7).

The second approach can also be referred to as the market approach. This approach is the exact opposite of the first approach and it views the creation of decent work as a negative and harmful goal to aspire to, especially in the short term. The key argument of this approach is that decent work is an unjustified intervention in the market, which distorts the labour market's equilibrium and leads to uncompetitive and rigid labour markets (Webster, 2011b:8). For ADCORP (2010), Labour's insistence on the creation of decent work, is in fact an 'insistence on an outdated paradigm' (Cited in Webster, 2011b:8). Labour "heavily influenced by the increasingly outdated paradigm of permanent, 9am – 5pm employment. Such employment simply does not have the flexibility needed to meet the manpower needs of the modern workplace" (ADCORP, 2010, cited in Webster, 2011b:8).

In 2009, President Jacob Zuma alluded to the NGP when he said in his State of the Nation address that "the creation of decent work will be at the centre of our economic policies" and that "we have to forge ahead to promote a more inclusive economy" (Zuma cited in Sparks, 2010:2). Zuma, Sparks argues 'didn't seem to realise that was an economic oxymoron' (Sparks, 2010:2).

Decent work, it is often argued leads to a rigid labour market, which discourages employment and harms competitiveness (Webster, 2011a). In the PSI, employers bemoan the harm caused by excessive wage demands by workers (SATAWU) and 'inflexible' labour laws that make for a rigid and unaffordable labour market (Employer interview, 2011). Steve Conradie, the CEO of the Security Industry Alliance (SIA) pointed out that there are instances where higher labour costs are leading to an increased use of technology, which is replacing labour (SIA interview, 2011). The market approach prescribes labour market flexibility as a way of improving competitiveness by reducing labour market rigidities. The approach seeks a more flexible labour market, substituting secure, formal better paying jobs and benefits with more insecure, informal jobs with significantly less benefits and wages (Webster, 2011b).

By way of responding to the market approach, Webster (2011a) advocates a "progressive realisation" paradigm, which envisions the realisation of decent work not as an immediately achievable goal, but one that we can aspire to and progressively realise over a number of years under an alternative developmental path. This long-term vision has to take into account the specific social, political and economic landscape of any given country.

Against each other, these first two approaches give rise to a dilemma – 'whether to abandon international labour standards to become globally competitive or to try and strike a pragmatic balance between decent work and enterprise efficiency' (Webster, 2011a:162). Some analysts argue that "decent work would make it even more difficult to make inroads into SA's problem of large-scale unemployment" (Mkokeli and Shoba, 2011:2). This research focuses on private security guards in Johannesburg, which has become a sector absorbing many young black men in particular. If standards were to be dropped in the sector, perhaps competitiveness may be

enhanced. But this would most certainly open up a path for super-exploitation, gross non-compliance with legislation, gross violation of basic human rights and indeed give rise to latent contradictions with the values enshrined in the Freedom Charter. It would in actual fact reduce aspirations to achieving decent work to mere wishful thinking rather than a realizable policy goal.

The next few pages discuss at length the third or radical approach to decent work. This approach comprises of scholars such as Barchiesi, Waterman and Standing. According to Webster (2011b), this approach, decent work is not achievable under conditions of capitalism. This approach expresses a deep scepticism about the feasibility of realising decent work under capitalism (Webster, 2011b). For Gillian Hart (2011), the dominance of the "minerals-energy complex" of mining and heavy industry in decision-making in the South African economy makes "decent jobs for a substantial proportion of the working class within existing structures of capital accumulation and global competition" a "chimera", a fanciful conception (cited in Webster, 2011b: 9).

The third or radical approach, decent work leads to a backward-looking nostalgia, justifies exploitation of low wage and precarious work (Barchiesi, 2011b:1–10). For Barchiese decent work, 'leads to a mystical conception where global capitalism could be 'allegedly attuned with solidarity and social justice' (Barchiesi, 2011b: 1-10, in Webster, 2011b:9).

This approach is embraced by those on the left and also from social movements. It rejects decent work on the basis that it champions incremental reformism (social democratic means) as a method of advancing the interests of the working class (See Webster and Adler, 2000 for a discussion on reformism in South Africa). For Barchiesi, decent work pacifies worker

possibilities, demobilises the working class, encourages workers to accept capitalism, and assists to restore it rather than undermine it (Barchiesi, 2011a).

Guy Standing, a former employee of the ILO argues that the notion of 'decent work' has been used by the ILO leadership to reassert the organisation's relevance in what is euphemistically called 'the international community (Standing, 2008:371). The vagueness of the notion, he argues has not been helped by the 'conventional reference to rights, values, fairness and the supremely vague notion of 'social dialogue'. More tellingly, there has been no effort to evaluate mainstream labour and social policies by 'decent work' criteria. For example, is China's labour law reform consistent with the ILO's labour standards'? (Standing, 2008: 371).

Standing further argues; "The pursuit of flexible labour relations at the centre of emerging labour markets all over the world makes it particularly difficult for the ILO to identify employers and employees. Unless these are clear, labour law and regulations become hard to apply. Flexibility has meant a growing fuzziness, with labour externalization and the global resurgence of labour broking, employment 'agencies' and labour sub-contracting. ILO conventions began to look inapplicable for a lot of work statuses" (Standing cited in Webster, 2011a: 166).

Standing argues that there is a "latent contradiction in the ILO as an organisation that grew out of the industrialised world where 'decent work' had been largely won, and the underdeveloped world where it is often felt that "a bad job is better than no job" (Standing cited in Webster, 2011a:166). The ANC's general secretary, Gwede Mantashe, was suggestive of this position when he states "that the jobs the party wanted to see need not necessarily be 'decent' – as there was "nothing more (degrading) than being unemployed" (Mkokeli and Shoba, 2011:1). Standing adds that the ILO was established in 1919 "to equalize conditions of competition

among the nations so that trade might be liberated without danger to standards of living" (Polanyi 1957:27–8). However, this applied to the 'first-world industrialised world competing with each other on tertiary goods and not the developing countries' (Standing, 2008:357). Standing argues: "If countries that were potential competitors provided their firms and workers with similar subsidies and regulations, they thereby 'equalize competition', which was acceptable. But that deal hindered market entry by the colonized parts of the world. Although rhetorically committed to common standards for all countries, the ILO was, perhaps inadvertently, a means of locking in developing countries into the international division of labour, to the advantage of the affluent capitalist countries" (Standing, 2008:357).

One of the more radical critiques of decent work has come from the work of Barchiesi (2011b). Barchiesi does not reject the goals of decent work and is not evaluative of whether its overarching objectives are desirable or not. In fact he believes that decent jobs are better than indecent jobs. He accepts that policies inspired by the ILO's four elements of decent work (employment opportunities, social dialogue, social protection, and worker rights) can improve the lives and employment conditions of workers. However, Barchiesi (2011b) is very sceptical of its feasibility in a reality where work that is 'decent' is for a shrinking minority of workers. His view is that the idea of decent work does not begin to counter the social forces and process (i.e. violence of financial capitalism) that makes work indecent for millions of workers in the first place. The concept of decent work, he argues, would have no answer to the possibility that, after, all, work in a capitalist society is not supposed to be 'decent' but just profitable. For him, the idea is only useful as an 'art of government', a pedagogy useful in shaping workers' possibilities, but utterly useless and fails a practical test (Barchiesi, 2011b). If capitalism is not supposed to create decent work the only available choice that confronts many South African

workers daily is the choice between a horrible job or no job at all. Some opt for informal jobs because they get to make more money than if they are in formal employment. Mr Khumalo, a car guard illustrates this:

> *"The jobs are not paying … that's why people are turning to informal jobs, because they're paying more than formal jobs"* (Khumalo, 2012; Valet and Hustler, 2012:4).

Barchiesi (2011b:10) further argues that the discourse of job creation and decent work in a society where jobs are utterly precarious functions at the 'micro political level of daily lives as a 'pedagogical technology', an 'art of governmentality' in the Foucauldian sense, which 'functions to narrow down the potential of workers, enable critical powerlessness, and maintain subjugation' (Barchiesi, 2011b:10). The 'centrality of decent work in the governmental norms of society enables a discourse in which the state shapes workers subjectivities, which involves shifting attention away from reflection on the current precariousness of employment towards an "idealized celebration" driven by the idea of decent work' (Barchiesi, 2011b:10). 'Constituting them as workers in waiting, factors of production and human resources constantly optimized and fine-tuning their potential for labour market competition, the reliance on which becomes the only virtuous modality of social inclusion' (Barchiesi, 2011b:10).

Barchiesi highlights the gap between the centrality of job creation and decent work and the actual social reality, as well as the shortcomings of making work the main medium of attaining a decent life and the "governmental effects of job creation discourse, its capacity to deploy languages, knowledge, and representations to produce a social order by orientating values and conducts, signifying social existence, and structuring social conflicts" (Barchiesi, 2011b:.4). In this way, Barchiesi believes, 'the concept of decent work reconciles the imperatives of accumulation and governance' (Barchiesi, 20111b:12-13). Precariousness, he argues is

constituted by 'the systematic violence of globalised corporate capital, which serves the states interests' (Barchiesi, 2011b:11). Deploying job creation and decent work at the centre of policy formulation makes the precarious multitude governable by shifting focus from the violence towards desires around production. The centrality of decent work in policy formulation functions to provide solace to the growing ranks of the precariat, attempting to find their way through widespread downward social mobility (Barchiesi, 2011b:12–3).

Another argument of Barchiesi against the idea of decent work relates to production and the creation of value. The focus on decent work, he believes does not allow us to conceptualise how production takes place in society outside of the workplace. Production is essentially human activity that capital captures and turns into value, which is realised as profit on the markets. Many things enter production outside of the workplace. Work effort cannot be possible without health, skills and the general cognitive abilities developed throughout one's life course. In the welfare state, companies would pay taxes that would finance education, health and so forth. However, this no longer happens in the neo-liberal context (Barchiesi, 2011b:6-25).

Capital no longer has to pay and this has been shifted onto the shoulders of families (who are in any case getting poorly-remunerated jobs). The point is; all the skills developed not by capital are yet needed by it- essentially, capital needs your life to make profit. The idea of capital transforming life into a factor of production is not adequately grasped if by production we only mean what happens in the workplace, the work effort exerted throughout the duration of the working day. This is because a lot of what is used by capital to make profit is not produced in the working day. The concept of decent work, he attests, does not take into consideration the fact that production is not only the work effort of the working day that creates value and profit,

but your life, desire, ambition, cognitive ability developed across your lifespan Barchiesi, 2011b:6-25.

Barchiesi's understanding of work is not completely at odds with that provided by Webster et al (2003). Work should indeed take into consideration the social composition of the worker outside of employment. Work includes the 'social processes involved in the daily and generational reproduction of the labouring masses' (Luxton and Bezanson, 2006). Work not only means employment, but the different dimensions that constitute life itself. Barchiesi seems to suggest, that the concept of decent work takes none of these factors into consideration.

The nine themes of decent work overwhelmingly focus on the workplace, but the concept does hint at social reproduction although insufficiently. (Ghai, 2002:17) states that 'social security as an aspect of decent work is designed to meet urgent needs for subsistence and to provide against contingencies' which may include 'unemployment, sickness, maternity, disability...occupational injury and family' Further, Ghai (2002:17) states that ' national social protection measures are designed to meet the needs of wage employees'. Ghai (2002:17) states further that states must 'develop social security arrangements that meet the basic needs of vulnerable groups and protect the working poor against contingencies'. One of the pillars of decent work is social protection which includes things like: pension, health insurance, provident fund, UIF, and various other initiatives that aim to provide some degree of social security for workers and their families. In this way, it may be said that decent work does to a degree move beyond the work place and considers how workers live, considers their sense of dignity and pride especially when they are out of work. Through its pillar of social protection, it highlights the need for employers and the government to contribute to the cost of social reproduction by providing a package of benefits to workers and their families. Decent work provides a

perspective or framework that can highlight the dual goals of economic and social development (Rodgers, 2007)

Barchiesi (2011b:11-25) believes that the focus should not be on decent work but on 'autonomous work sustained by forms of redistribution and decommodification, such as a non-work related universal income regardless of one's employment status'. These forms would enable a re-appropriation of value at a society-wide level of livelihoods that capital otherwise appropriates at no cost. This would constitute, Barchiesi believes, commonfare rather than welfare (Barchiesi, 2011b:11–25).

Barchiesi believes the promise of liberation that identifies work as a signifier of social progress has basically failed to fulfil its promise. The transition to democracy has highlighted insecurity in the workplace and in society as a critical feature of the South African social milieu. Nearing two decades of democracy and the victories won in democratic rights, trade union recognition and economic incorporation through wages among other things, the right to work and security remain unattainable for the majority. The notion of decent work for him is a non-starter.

Waterman (2005) makes a similar point arguing that decent work is a desperate ploy, 'nostalgic of a historical period long gone'. In this view, decent work is an example of a 'mournful attachment' (Waterman, 2005:12). It consists, he argues, of "the protestation that a return to a mythical, universalized protected labour force with benefits and rights can indeed square the circle of enhancing human dignity, enable growth, build communities, and equip workers with tools to compete in unforgivingly flexible labour markets" (Waterman, 2005:12). Waterman argues that the idea of decent work projects into the future its, "assumptive logic according to which it is in the nature of capitalist globalization to obviously evolve, in conditions of liberal democracy, in a gender sensitive, worker-friendly, environmentally sustainable

direction" (Waterman, 2005:12). For Waterman, decent work is based on the idea of worker-friendly capitalism, but what this does he contends, limits our understanding of the power dynamics of the current reality of liberalisation and the reasons why it makes work indecent for the majority. Waterman (2005) argues that the centrality of decent work in the imagination of the ILO and various governments that have signed the convention despite the overwhelming evidence of the material decay of working conditions on the ground is due to the desperation of trade unions and left liberal technocrats to remain relevant after having been overwhelmed by neo-liberalism worldwide.

The figure of the precariat

'Globalisation has transformed the nature of work, fragmenting class structure and giving rise to a new one', Standing (2011:9) argues. The collapse of state led capitalism of the golden age of capitalism of the 1950s and 1960s paved the way for a return to the pre-Great Depression economics of the neo-classics (Glyn, 2006). The rise of neo-liberalism in the early 1970s has given rise to a market labour regime that places emphasis on labour market flexibility and liberalisation. Under this regime, work has undergone significant transformation, which has seen unprecedented erosion of the standard employment relation (SER) (Webster, 2006:22), and the rise of contingent forms of employment (Buhlungu, 2010). Rodger and Rodger (1989) argue that the growth of atypical forms of employment is one of the defining features of the neo-liberal labour regime. The SER has been undermined by the rise of atypical employment. 'Atypical work is more easily defined by what is not than by what it is; it covers a host of forms of work which deviate from the standard' (Rodger, 1989: 1). These transformations also draw new boundaries as Webster (2006:20) accurately highlights that "liberalisation of the economy and informalisation are leading to a growing differentiation of work, establishing new boundaries of social inclusion and exclusion". The global restructuring of work has facilitated a tremendous growth of precarious employment, which does not meet the universal basic standards of employment as defined by the ILO. 'Flexible accumulation' or 'new managerialism' has seen the increase of casual, part-time work, outsourcing and the growth of temporary employment services (TES) or labour brokers (Littler, 1992 cited in Mapadimeng, 1995). This nature of employment is known as triangular employment gives rise to difficulties, such as identifying the employer (Standing,2008:366). Standing (2011:6) 'argues that flexibility has become a vital

process through which risk and insecurity is shifted onto the shoulders of working class and families'.

The fragmentation of the class structure has given rise to a new category of workers who are seen by Standing as a direct outcome of neo-liberal globalisation. He calls this 'new' category of workers, the 'precariat' the new dangerous class. The term precariat he argues 'can be understood as an attempt to give a name to that specific category in society experiencing a precarious existence' (Standing, 2011:7). For Standing, 'perhaps the new reality of the 20th century calls forth a new kind of vocabulary, reflecting the nature of class relations and insecurity as shaped by the hegemonic global order of neo-liberalism. The precariat, he argues is a 'class-in-the-making and not yet a class-for-itself' (Standing, 2011:7).

This concept has sparked debates, contesting its meanings – sociologically, politically and analytically. Some analysts contest Standings' assertion that this is a 'new class' and an outcome of neo-liberal globalisation. They argue that what Standing is describing with the concept 'precariat' is in actual fact not a new class. The African context in particular is used to make this point. Precarization, Barchiesi argues, has been central to capitalist accumulation and appropriation of the social cooperation of living labour. Moodie (1991:11) observes among mineworkers that 'their contracts have typically ranged from four months to two years at work away from homes and families for wages that were, until quite recently , pitifully low'. Moreover, precarization is not dependent on the emergence of neo-liberalism, 'financialisation and their impending crisis' (Barchiesi, 2011a:17). Some reject the term arguing that it is politically dangerous and potentially divisive because it establishes artificial distinctions among the working people (Hoffer, 2011).

Standing argues, there is an existence of a 'precariat' – a new class consisting of "many millions around the world without an anchor of stability" (Standing, 2011:1). This class is not homogenous, but consists of several variants comprising of "the teenager who flirts in and out of the internet café while surviving on fleeting jobs, the migrant who uses his wits to survive, the single mother uncertain of where the money for food will come from, the 60-year-old man who takes up a casual job to help pay the medical bills and the intern – used by employers as a form cheap dispensable labour" (Standing, 2011:13). Also included are the 'welfare claimants, temporary career-less workers, part-timers, and the exploding numbers in call centres, the disabled, the 'denizen' – those who lack the rights that would make them citizens. Included in the denizen are the migrants' (Standing, 2011:13-14). The precariat in a sense are those doing insecure forms of labour that are 'unlikely to promote upward social mobility' or help them build a desirable identity or career (Autor and Houseman, 2010 cited in Standing, 2011:15). For Standing the precariat could universally describe just about anyone today – sliding into the precariat whether voluntary (some enter it because they reject the available alternatives, some because of the convenience it provides at a given time). Some enter it due to mishaps or failings (Standing, 2011:59). Autor and Houseman (2010, cited in Standing, 2011:15) argue that 'entering a low paying job as in the case of the precariat, permanently reduces the prospects of upward social mobility and gaining a decent income'. Many, it is argued, enter these jobs as a 'ladder into desired jobs', but the probability is highly compromised by taking up a precarious job. Government policies by and large promote flexible labour markets, which are creating atypical employment that hardly meet basic needs and hardly lead anywhere. The likelihood of precarious employment promoting upward social mobility is significantly low. Temporary job is a strong indicator of a form of precariousness, which once entered reproduces itself

maintaining the new lower income status (Standing, 2011: 15). This phenomenon, Standing ((Standing, 2011:48–9) calls 'the precarity trap'.

To be 'precariatized' is to be "subject to pressures and experiences that lead to a precarious existence, of living in the present, without a secure identity or sense of development achieved through work and lifestyle" (Standing, 2011:16). Being a precariat does not only mean being in atypical employment, short term and with very limited benefits, it also entails "being in a status that offers no sense of career, no sense of secure occupational identity and few, if any, entitlements to the state and enterprise benefits that several generations of those who saw themselves as belonging to the industrial proletariat or the salariat had come to expect as their due" (Standing, 2011:9). The precariat, for Standing, comprises of two key dimensions – belonging to a distinctive socio-economic group characterised by a unique bundle of insecurities and lacking a work based identity (Standing, 2011:7).

The precariat as a distinctive socio-economic group consists of people who lack the seven forms of labour-related security under industrial citizenship. These include: labour market security, employment security, job security, work security, skills reproduction security, income security and representation security (Standing 2011:10).

The precariat is not part of the working class, the proletariat, the lumpenproletariat or the working poor. Although it may share some characteristics with these groups, it stands distinct from them. The proletariat, Standing argues, consists mainly of workers in stable, long-term employment, with fixed routes of advancement, having workplace representation (unionisation) and collective agreements as well as an identifiable employer. On the other hand, many entering the precariat would not know their employer, how many colleagues they had or likely to have in

the future. They are also not middle class, as they lack the basic entitlements in the form of a predictable salary, status and benefits of this group (Standing, 2011:5–18).

The precariat is quite a broad category, it is a 'heterogeneous mass', which Standing views as a "class-in-the-making", but one which has the potential to become a "class-in-it-self". However, Standing draws on the 'Weberian notion of status in constructing this argument, while Marxist concepts focusing on relations of production are absent' (Randle, 2011:173).

'The precariat experiences, anger, anomie, anxiety and alienation' (Standing, 2011:19). The anger manifests from the diminishing probability of upward social mobility, a meaningful existence and relative deprivation. By anomie, Durkheim meant, 'the absence of norms or of established standards' which often lead to a state of 'despair' (Dillion, 2010:103). These feelings, Standing (2011:19) argues are born out of the 'artlessness, career-less jobs, continued feelings of defeat and social stigma, like being accused of laziness, being directionless, lacking purpose and basically being of no significant worth'. The anxiety stems from the precarious life being led under circumstances of crippling insecurity whereby being fired tomorrow would be expected and leaving might not seem so bad perhaps more so when other possibilities of employment exist. For Standing (2011:18-21), the precariat is alienated because the product of one's labour is immediately appropriated by others for their own use. He believes that Marx had long identified this phenomenon among the proletariat who had no control over their own labour and its produce. Standing asserts that the precariat too experiences several doses of this including a feeling of being fooled – "being happy because you have a job although it isn't clear why" (Standing, 2011:18–21).

Castel (2000 cited in Candeias, 2004:5) argues 'precarization represents the emergence of a new collective (class) position'. Castels, like Standing believes that 'everyone feels the pressure of precarization, many are aware of the possibility of falling into it' – Candeias argues that this conception does not reflect the general situation. Candeias is not oblivious to the significant shifts towards precarization, but believes that 'we cannot speak of a coherent social class' (Candeias, 2004:5). For Castel (2000 cited in Candeias, 2004:5) there is a general 'tendency of the precariat to self-arrange, marked by habitualised mobility of provisional muddling through'. Their dream of becoming like the others (those in formal employment) is sadly never fulfilled like the permanent temporary, who overtime develops a realism of 'hopelessness' coupled with decreasing chances of integration, 'passive acceptance and resignation (sporadic eruptions of violence of a self-destructive character)' (Castel, 2000:359 cited in Candeias, 2004:5). For Castels their lack of a work-based identity, which is an essential element of social integration, they are a 'social non-force, without agency'. For Hans-Jurgen Beiling (1996:84, cited in Candeias, 2004:6), the precariat are a 'non-class of marginalised people'. For Dahrendorf, they are an anomic, atomised group whose 'interests are not articulated' (Dahrendorf, 1994, cited in Candeias, 2004:6).

Candeias (2004:7) argues that Castel, Hans-Jurgen Beiling and Dahrendorf may have a point about some of the consequences of the disintegrating old Fordist model. However, he feels that they tend to project a view from above on individuals and various groups – stripping away their subjectivity as active in social cooperation. 'Precariousness is not a destiny, but a process whereby subjects are active in shaping its concrete forms and tendencies' (Candeias, 2004:6). Precariousness is not a destiny and this is highlighted by things such as 'life strategies to cope with increasing insecurity and lack of money' (Candeias, 2004:6). For Candeias

(2004:6), the groups of 'people that experience precariousness as a common process develop certain forms of solidarity and collective action' to resist some of consequences through 're-orientation to family and neighbourhood' structures. The lack of stability and predictability in the workplace indeed gives rise to a sense of identity crisis, but identity Candeias (2004: 60 argues is not 'exclusively dependent on integration into labour markets'. Rather, the reproductive sphere (education, care work, house work etc) constituted by social integration into socially necessary and socially recognised work in cooperative relations which are able to support the development of the individual are a pivotal part (Candeias, 2004:6).

Candeias (2004:6) argues that various developments, often in the form of sporadic resistance, speak against the idea of viewing the precariat as an 'atomised non-class of marginalised individuals'. According to Candeias (2004:6) the film, *Bread and Roses* (2000), indicates how cleaning women along with other 'members of the precariat rise and what consequences for the banks and enterprises in Los Angeles this had'. He argues that 'non-union formations such as the *living wage or minimum wage* initiatives in the United States, the transnational Euro marches against unemployment and precarious employment or no-seat campaigns and the alternative movement unionism in France' (Candeias, 2004:6-7). For Candeias, such actions pose a challenge the idea that the precariat is a marginalized group that lack agency and thus unable to undertake collective action (Candeias, 2004:6-7).

Candeias (2004:1) speaks of double precarization highlighting how 'efforts to establish a transnational neo-liberal hegemony through processes of privatisation is shifting the burden of public goods and services essential for social reproduction to the individual whose wages are stagnating and being eroded for a growing mass of the working people'. He argues that these processes have led to a 'decomposition and recomposition of the working classes' (Candeias,

2004:1). Candeias (2004:1-4) points that the contrast between the rising costs of social reproduction (transport, education, and housing) and the erosion of conditions necessary to fulfil them leads to the precarization of individual, collective agency and the quality of life. For him, this double precarization is becoming a reality for a growing number of people, even those that did not expect it like information technology (IT) and other sectors. For Candeias (2004), precariousness is not only a matter of employment status and the conditions of the labour market. Precariousness for most labour sociologists like Standing is primarily about insecure jobs. Candeias' concept of 'double precariousness' however, is similar to what Barchiesi is means by precariousness.

Barchiesi (2011a) offers a different understanding of precariousness to that offered by Standing. For Barchiesi, precariousness is a process that is pervasive across the individual's life course and social existence. For Barchiesi (2011b) 'Precariousness is defined by the contrast between, on the one hand, social policies and governmental discourse that imposes the search for a job, any job, at any condition, as the 'virtuous' way to gain social inclusion (also due to privatization, fiscal austerity); and on the other hand, the reality of jobs that are mainly insecure, which hardly provide adequate incomes even to meet basic needs'.

Barchiesi (2011a:16) critiques job creation that in the imagination of the government, the left and workers in general is a signifier of social progress and development. What Barchiesi finds remarkable is the fact that faith in employment-based views of development and emancipation persist despite the reality of the growing material decay of the conditions of employment for the majority, increasing precariousness and unemployment. Barchiesi argues that there is a growing gap between the discourse of job creation and decent work and the actual reality of inadequate jobs that fall short of being tools to address basic needs of the labouring

class. He asserts that "workers define jobs whose creation they still deemed desirable not only in terms of economic transactions or productive activity, but as a metaphor of an idealized future" (Barchiesi, 2011a:1). This idealised future is premised on the idea of decent work where workers' vision saw "decent and stable jobs, provided by an authentic workers' government under a decisive, competent leadership, underpinning a desired social order infused with gender, age and national hierarchies, where decent jobs can reassert the functions of breadwinning masculinity". This futuristic perspective of an idealised world of work, he argues prevents the necessary reflection on the prevailing precariousness of employment, insecurity, low wages and inadequate benefits. The idea that wage labour under capitalism is an avenue to a dignified and meaningful life constitutes "working class melancholia" – a 'type of grief that cripples self-reflection on a loss because the grieving subject flagellates itself as opposed to scrutinising the object that is lost'. For Barchiesi, the left's campaigning for decent jobs have "melancholically longed for a lost world where capitalism could be allegedly attuned with solidarity and social justice" (Barchiesi, 2011b:1–10).

Barchiesi (2011b) argues that in order to understand precariousness it is insufficient to focus only on working conditions. In other words precariousness for Barchiesi is a critical condition of instability and unpredictability, which transcends the workplace. Precariousness is a situation where wage employment is insecure and so are the daily struggles of workers to make ends meet.

Barchiesi argues that "precarization of employment is not primarily determined, as in the conventional wisdom of much of productivist sociology, by the breakup of existing working classes forced to lose protections, collective organizing, and rights, which underpinned welfarist ideologies of work with dignity" (Barchiesi, 2011b:7). Precarization is a process through which

capitalists attempt to transform the living and "the commons" into profit. It involves a process by which social cooperation is turned into a profit and subjected to the laws of the market, both essential to the functioning of capital but also profoundly destabilises capital (Barchiesi, 2011b:7). The violence of financial capitalism, which according to Marazzi (2010, cited in Barchiesi, 2011a:4) highlights the idea that capitalist accumulation of the current period, is premised on the 'colonisation and capture of life by finance', transforming it into a factor of production open to the destructive nature of fluctuations of financial markets (Barchiesi, 2011b:4). According to him, living labour is not, unlike waged work, created by capital. Capital merely appropriates social value it did not create or pay for. Capital takes up the cognitive, linguistic, and communicative skills individuals acquire throughout their lives, mostly with the view of becoming employable in a context of declining guarantees and social protections Barchiesi (2011b:7). For Barchiesi, the cognitive linguistic autonomy of living labour defines precarious employment "with its attendant expectations, claims and needs, as a contested field of signification" (Barchiesi, 2011b:7).

The 'creative potential of social cooperation' is narrowly defined to become an object of 'market competition' (Barchiesi, 2011b:8). Barchiesi (2011b:7) argues that this 'freezing of living labour' around the needs to survive in a context of a triple crisis (poverty, unemployment and inequality) as well as fiscal austerity and commodification of basic services creates social tensions culminating in social uprisings as was seen in the Arab nations and insurrections in 'southern Europe and the United Kingdom' are essentially demands for dignity undermined by the labour market and requirements of production. These social uprisings, he argues, cannot be explained by the dialectical methods of the old left, 'where the development of forces of production clash with prevailing relations of production' (Barchiesi, 2011b8). That the

inculcation of social relations of cooperation by capital into its forces of production, establishes ground for struggle (Barchiesi, 2011b:8).

Barchiesi (2011b: 8) argues that the left holds the view that the precarization of employment is a result of the unstoppable neo-liberal assault on 'stable, secure, and unionised working classes'. In this way, precarious workers are seen as defeated, dominated and disempowered. They are referred to as the unorganised and thus speechless, anomic and invisible (Barchiesi, 2001b:8). Standing (2011:19) sees them as the new dangerous class which is angry, anomic, anxious and alienated and which without a "politics of paradise" responding to its fears, insecurities and aspirations through their incorporation to the fold of progressive politics premised on employment, and is susceptible to various sorts of reactionary and authoritarian forces. Barchiesi (2011b:24) however, differs with Standing. For Barchiesi (2011b), the "new dangerous class", is not a force susceptible to right-wing and authoritarian adventures, but rather the focus on 'employment and productivism as norms of social order' while they fail to manifest a decent life for the employed and unemployed equally. In other words, the real danger is presented by the broken or unfulfilled promise of liberation, which is centred on the creation of decent jobs (Barchiesi, 2011b:24).

Barchiesi (2011b:9) argues that the left's imagination of precarious employment as a condition that nullifies personality and political agency functions to 'silence workers' sense of strategies, autonomy and signifying practices as effectively as the economic liberalisation it deplores. The representation of precariousness as a social predicament, Barchiesi (2011b:9) argues 'fails to politically contest the productive and cognitive potentials of precarious workers, thus consigning them to neo-liberal narratives of individual entrepreneurship' but it also 'leads to the simplistic view of precarity as an occupational category and position in the labour market'.

This he argues does not appreciate the 'broader political implications of precarious jobs as a social condition determined by work as a claim to decent life and its normatively enforced centrality in a social order marked by extensive social inequality and redistributive provisions (Barchiesi, 2011b:10).

For Standing, like many other sociologists, jobs are the norm. Having a job is viewed as a signifier of 'virtuous active citizenship', for Barchiesi, having no job or a bad unstable job is in and of itself a problem, 'a social pathology'. For Barchiesi, having a job is also part of the problem as jobs have undergone continuous erosion and downgrading with low wages and very little benefits. 'The glorification of jobs, by many sociologists of work, merely obscures and disguises the manner in which employment today is a decisive vehicle for poverty, inequality and social exclusion' (Barchiesi, 2011b:8–15).

Barchiesi (2011a:25) argues, "Precariousness does not disable, but indeed encourages workers' production of sense, strategies, and political possibilities". He does not view precarity as a pathological condition of disempowerment and lack of agency even though the precariat lives in harsh conditions of uncertainty, anxiety and desperate material conditions. He believes that this social reality is as a result of the decay of redistributive safety networks as much as with the nature of precarious employment itself. For him, precariousness signifies a potential basis of a new type of political imagination, where redistributive and decommodification demands are made in view of the material decay of employment conditions and the failure of jobs to facilitate social inclusion (Barchiesi, 2011b:25).

This research takes private security guards as social actors, whose social composition is relatively unexplored to test some of the arguments on the subject of, precariousness and decent work through analysing the work experiences of private security guards in Johannesburg.

CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHODS

Combined Approach: Qualitative (unstructured in-depth interviews) and Quantitative (survey questionnaire)

Strauss and Corbin (1998) argue that the choice between qualitative or quantitative research methods depends on the nature of the research question and the researchers' desired outcomes. My research question aims to understand how outsourced security guards in Johannesburg experience work and how they live. I explore the nature of their working conditions and attempt to see how that relates to their livelihoods. In other words, I aim to understand how work and social reproduction interact. Peck (1996) argues that production cannot be divorced from reproduction and that the two spheres are linked and often impact on each other.

Questionnaire surveys provide important descriptive information on such things as the conditions of work for a large number of people, but they do not capture the voice and lived experiences of workers. My choice of research was motivated by the desire to get both the overview of the conditions of work in the PSI and also to capture security guards' individual subjective experiences. For understanding working people's experiences – the structured survey, the questionnaire, or the rigid interview – are poor tools of analysis. The study uses qualitative interviews as a way of analysing life stories and home visits as a way of studying experiences. This method will also allow the researcher to explore not only the work experience, but also the household (Bozzoli and Nkotsoe, 1991). Greenstein (2003:53) argued that the qualitative approach provides a rich and contextual perspective that cannot be obtained through the use of a standardized questionnaire. E.P Thompson (1970) offers a complex approach to the study of workers' subjective experiences. He defines experience as comprising of "the mental and

emotional response, whether of an individual or of a social group, to many inter-related events or to many repetition of the same kind of event" (Thompson, 1995:9–10). Experience he argues is "valid and effective within determined limits" (Thompson, 1995:10). Thompson was more concerned about the arrival or production of experience, than its limits. Experience arises spontaneously within social beings, but it does not arise without thought; it arises because men and women are rational, and they think about what is happening to themselves and their world (Thompson, 1995:10).

Thompson's understanding (1970:9) of class highlights the dynamics that make or constitute experience. For him 'class is neither a category nor a structure, but a phenomenon that happens as a result of common experiences and feelings that people share and may articulate towards those whose interests are different'. He argues that experience is largely determined by the productive relations enter by birth or voluntarily (Thompson, 1970:9).

Thompson's approach to experience was apt for understanding the agency of security guards and thus equipped this research with the tools essential for the elucidation of their day-to-day lived experiences. This approach, is also called the 'total experience approach', and provides a 'holistic view of the worker' and transcends narrow boundaries that only focus on the workplace (i.e. working conditions only). The total experience approach assisted in attempting to capture and preserve the 'authentic lived experiences' of security guards in Johannesburg. A crucial aspect of this process is the vivid documentation of their voice, and evaluating total experience from the point of view of the men and women who 'lived it' (Tilly, 1968:289).

I conducted 24 in-depth unstructured interviews with security guards in Johannesburg and also did two home visits. Unstructured in-depth interviews are known for their ability to

generate thick detail and description, which allows the researcher to gain understanding and meanings that participants attach to different social processes (Bryman, 2004:19). Greenstein (2003:53) argued that the primary aim of projects that adopt a qualitative approach is to describe, explain and understand the behaviour of the participants under study. He further argued that in-depth semi-structured interviews involve a clear list of issues that need to be addressed, together with a set of questions to be answered. However, there is greater flexibility around the sequence in which they may be asked and how the respondent chooses to respond to the question asked or topic at hand. My interview schedule was loosely based on the questions asked in the decent work survey questionnaire (see Appendix 2).

I conducted most of my interviews with security guards at their sites of work. Some I interviewed on weekends and some during their off days. These interviews were conducted at places where participants felt most comfortable. Some of them invited me to their homes, and some came to my flat in Braamfontein where the interview was conducted over tea or lunch (Weiss, 1995). The usual length of my unstructured in-depth interviews was between two and two and half hours each.

I spent time with my participants and often paid them visits, ensuring that I developed a relationship with them. Security guards felt at ease to give me their phone numbers and also allowed me to record them. Using a tape-recorder was a good idea because it allowed me to take notes, have a close reading of the body language (such as facial expressions), and listen carefully to the tone of the spoken word to try and gain more insight (Weiss, 1995).

According to Weiss (1995) important interviewing skills include; careful listening, sensitivity, accepting silences, effective note-taking and/or recording (with permission from

respondent), and being attentive. Weiss (1995) argues that the success of the interview as a data collecting method relies quite heavily on the personal skills of the actual interviewer. Interviews, he argues allow the qualitative researcher to gain an in-sider perspective and therefore to see social reality through the eyes of the participants. Face-to-face interviews also provide the advantage of 'clarifying ambiguities in the given responses' (Legard, Keegan and Ward, 2003). While it is generally accepted that in-depth interviews 'are one of the main methods of data collection used in qualitative research' as Legard, Keegan and Ward, 2003:138 argue but without the appropriate skills, the interview method can easily fall short of being a useful data gathering method (Weiss, 1995).

Informal interviews are not free of weaknesses, but some of the weaknesses can be reduced through reflecting upon one's interviewing skills and constantly working towards refining them. Interviews are time consuming and the process of transcribing is tedious and laborious (weiss, 1995). Interviews tend to take away some control from the interviewer because they rely heavily on the desire, the commitment and will of participants to part-take in the study (Legard, Keegan and Ward, 2003).

During the research, I kept a notebook in which I would write brief notes highlighting the important themes that emerged from the interviews. Most were done in front of my participants, with their permission, but other notes I wrote in my own time after the interview.

Burton (2000) holds the view that the combination of different methods in research has become an acceptable practice in social research.

The process of employing a combination of research methods to study a given unit of analysis is called triangulation (Burton, 2000). The statistical data obtained from the survey is

triangulated with the qualitative findings on the experiences of security guards in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of working conditions in the security industry in Gauteng. While these two methods are distinct, they are nevertheless complementary (Webster, 1985: xiv). The logic of combining different research approaches is that they have a greater potential to deepen our understanding of the social world we are studying (Lichterman, 2002).

Quantitative research: Gauteng decent work survey

The Gauteng Department of Economic Development (GDED) commissioned the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP), which is based at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) to conduct a decent work survey investigating the nature of working conditions in the security industry in Gauteng. Through my role as a masters' intern at SWOP under the guidance and supervision of Professor Edward Webster, I was afforded the opportunity to participate in the survey as part of the team. The fieldwork was conducted by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE), in which survey questionnaires were administered to over 1 200 security guards in Gauteng (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:7).

The survey used a decent work measurement tool (see Appendix 2) to measure decent work among security guards in Gauteng. The tool allows levels of insecurity among security guards to be measured using characteristics of their employment, regardless of whether they are working for registered or unregistered PSCs. The structure of the decent work measurement tool allows it to be transferrable to any other sector. Each of the nine decent work indicators were covered in the questionnaire by several items. For example, Indicator 2: Stability and security at work:

Q18. Do you have a contract of employment/contract or agreement to work in this place? 1. Yes – written, 2. Yes and 3. No

Q19. If yes, what sort of contract do you have? 1. Permanent/indefinite period, 2. Fixed term. Temporary, 3. Casual (day by day), 4. Other (describe).

The items were scored (e.g. 1 for 'Yes', 0 for 'No'). The items where summed up and the indicators rescaled to run from 0 to 1: 1 is the maximum score for decent work and 0 is an absence of decent work (i.e. a deficit). Questions left unanswered by respondents where left as 'missing'.

Case study

Burawoy (1979) argues that the case study remains a favoured method among industrial relations researchers. He adds that the case studies are chosen on the grounds of theoretical relevance as opposed to statistical representivity (Burawoy, 1979:9). The use of the case study method is based on the aim of the project, which is to gain focus, depth, context and specificity. De Vaus (2001:134) holds the view that case study design can enable the exploration of a 'topic on which little prior knowledge and understanding exists'. In light of the above, the case study is a suitable method to study the work experiences of security guards and has the potential of offering the researcher the depth needed for a sociologically sound study.

Sampling

The sample for the qualitative research was purposive. Security guards were located using snowballing in order to set up further interviews, specifically with security guards working for fly-by-night companies. Interviews were conducted throughout Johannesburg both during the

day, at night and during the early hours of the morning. McNeill (1989:39) defines sampling as a process 'of selecting the required number and characteristics of a given population for inclusion in a given study'. Buckingham and Saunders (2004:52) asserted that it is important to consider the nature of the research, time and the resources. A qualitative study does not strive for generalizations and statistical representation and can therefore be based on a small sample.

Survey sampling: Random cluster

The sampling method of the decent work survey was random cluster. Using this method, 80 areas or 'sub-places' where selected. A sub-place can be a suburb, with each sub-place spanning a varying number of enumeration areas. Enumeration areas (EA) are defined on the basis of population, with an attempt to have a similar size population in each area. Because sub-places contain varying numbers of enumeration areas, they can have very different population sizes. This was not, however, thought to be a problem for this research in that the distribution of security guards is likely to be very different to that of population. For example, while they will usually be few people living in an industrial area, there may be many security guards working there (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b). .

Over 1 200 security guards were interviewed in Gauteng. The study targeted various types of security guards such as: in-house employees, registered outsourced guards (formal), unregistered outsourced guards (informal), self-employed guards (for example car guards). Each fieldworker had to interview a total of 15 security guards in each sub-place. If a fieldworker, after a number of efforts, could not find 15 security guards in his/her allocated sub-place, they asked for another EA in which to find the rest of the guards to 'make-up' the 15. In order to cater for this possibility, 18 sub-places were randomly selected, with a further 20 selected to be

used where supplementary interviews were needed (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b).

In order to cut across all the categories of security guards, fieldworkers were provided with a list of common places (shopping malls, supermarkets, residential areas etc) in which they would most likely find security guards. Within any given sub-place, the fieldworker could not interview more than two guards from any of the categories. For example, if there were four supermarkets in the sub-place, the fieldworkers could only interview one guard from each of the supermarkets. Alternatively, if there were eight parking areas (including both street and parking lots), only one guard from each of the parking areas was interviewed. The fieldworkers did not interview more than one guard from any single place, i.e. not more than one guard from any one shopping mall (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b).

Once the fieldworker identified a security guard in a common place, he/she used the snowball method to find other guards by asking these guards where else there were security guards in that sub-place. The fieldworker had to explain to the guard that we were covering all types of security guards, including those employed by PSCs and the self-employed.

The sub-place approach worked well, and substitution or supplementation with a further sub-place was needed for only 12 sub-places. The distribution across the various metros and district councils included: City of Johannesburg (24), Ekurhuleni Metro (31), Metsweding District (2), Sedibeng District Municipality (6), Tswane Metro (10), West Rand District Municipality (7) (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b).

Access

Gaining access to a research site can be very difficult, but gaining access to security guards in Johannesburg was relatively easy. I did not gain access to them through their employers, but

simply went up to them in a normal, friendly, but respectful way. Many were willing to talk about their experiences. While security guards in Johannesburg are widespread, the general public usually ignores them. Often, I would find security guards sitting or standing all by themselves, lonely. My attempts at striking up conversation with them were normally successful. There were cases, however, where security guards were not willing to take part in the study. The reasons were usually related to the fear of being seen having long conversations that may prompt suspicion and questioning by their supervisors afterwards.

Ethics

The moment I began interacting with security guards, ethical issues immediately arose (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). As a social researcher, I have the right to conduct research, but this could not be done at the expense of the participants, the security guards. Before the interviews, I explained the study and declared that I am a student at Wits and that participation in the study was voluntary (Babbie and Mouton, 2001). Participants were informed that they did not have to answer all the questions and they reserved the right not to answer questions they did not wish to. I did everything in my power to avoid causing any harm to participants. All my interviews proceeded only after the participants granted me the permission to interview them (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

Anonymity and confidentiality were key concerns among participants. They were not obliged to provide me with their real names, if they did not wish to do so. The names used in the report are pseudonyms and are therefore not the real names of the security guards I interviewed. This is meant to protect the confidentiality and preserve the right to privacy of the participants (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

CHAPTER 3: THE NATURE OF THE PSI IN SOUTH AFRICA

The PSI operates alongside the South African Police Services (SAPS), providing private policing functions in South Africa (Berg, 2007:7). These two security service entities are different from each other and have different powers. On a basic level, these differences stem from the fact that the former is based in the private sector, while the latter is based in the public sector. However, similarities and overlaps do exist. The term 'private police' is often used as a way of highlighting the increasing similarities with the state police in relation to crime prevention, i.e. appearance (uniform and marked patrol vehicles) and control activities (Berg, 2007:7). The private security market is beginning to erode the former monopoly that public authorities had over security issues (Holmqvist, 2005). Increasingly, panic buttons are run by private reaction units rather than the state police (Segbers, Raiser and Volkmann, 2005).

Some studies found that the war declared by the United States of America on Iraq, was characterised by the involvement of over 20 000 private security personalle, employed by over 60 PSCs, carrying out military functions that are traditionally carried out and monopolised by the state (Singer, 2004, cited in Holmqvist, 2005:7). PSC in Iraq ensured the 'feeding and housing of troops, armed protection of oil facilities, power lines and high level officials', as well as the 'maintenance of key weapon systems such as M-1 tanks, Apache helicopters, and B-2 stealth bombers' (Keefe, 2004, cited in Holmqvist, 2005:24).

The PSI is a global phenomenon and can be found across the world in countries such as the United Kingdom, Scandinavia, Canada, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Belgium, Mozambique, and Kenya among others. Globally, the fear of crime has become a daily concern

for millions of people, fuelling the expansion of the PSI (Heidensohn, 1989, cited in Holmqvist, 2005). According to Holmqvist (2005) there is no exhaustive list outlining the number of security companies in the PSI globally. The security industry is worth billions of dollars and has grown from an estimated global annual turnover of US$55.6-billion in 1990 to US$202-billion by 2010 (Singer, 1997, cited in Holmqvist, 2005:7).

The Sectoral Determination 6 of 2001 is the main piece of South African legislation that defines the scope of activities and sets the conditions of employment in the PSI. The industry is not homogenous, but consists of a number of different security-related functions (PSIRA, 2008). The PSI comprises privately-owned companies whose core business is the daily provision of security-related services. Broadly, these include guarding (of fixed property, premises, cars, goods, persons or employees), armed response (includes responding to alarms at premises that are guarded by persons or by electronic means), and cash-in-transit (involves the transportation of money). Other activities include private investigation, risk security consultancy, manufacturing and distribution of security equipment and so forth (Department of Labour, 2001).

Weber's notion of the modern nation state

"The state is considered the sole source of the right to use violence ... the state is valued as the agency that guarantees security" (Weber, cited in Dillion, 2010:134).

Holmqvist (2005) draws on the works of Weber to construct an interpretation of the modern nation state's monopoly of violence and the dynamics introduced by the growth of the PSI, both in size and scope of functions. According to Weber, the defining characteristics of the modern nation state lies in its 'legal authority embedded in a set of norms (rational rules)

grounded in a society's collective and internationally established, impersonal force of law, and realised through ruling organisations such as a bureaucracy' (Dillon, 2010:136). Weber's notion of the modern nation state highlights the ways in which the 'legal authority of the state confers upon it certain key characteristics, such as the monopoly of the legitimate coercive power through violence, sanctioning, control and use of force' (Holmqvist, 2005:1). The modern state deploys 'coercion and violence in policing behaviour when it responds to criminal activity, mass protests or other activities that are seen as a threat to social order' (Dillon, 2010: 135). The police force and the military are the key agents, the 'institutionalised, legal-rational, bureaucratic structures' that provide surveillance and protection measures against both internal and external threats posed to the nation state's social order (Dillon, 2010: 135). The SAPS has the mandate to use legitimate coercive force to respond to people who act against the laws of the state. The SAPS' legitimacy to use force is generally accepted by the population, but sporadically comes under commentary when this force is deployed in ways that are perceived to be excessive and no longer in line with rational-legal procedures. Police brutality and the harassment of innocent citizens in South African townships illustrate this point (Matshedisho, 2011:228). These are often seen as aberrations rather than re-affirming the legal right sanctioned by the state to use violence. In Weber's conception, the state possesses unique power, which is derived partly from its monopoly over the use of force.

'The private provision of security and military services challenges conventional assumptions about the roles of the nation state as the main protagonist in military affairs and as the guarantor of physical security for its citizens' (Holmqvist, 2005:1). While the state is widely acknowledged as the dominant provider of security in general, it does not possess a monopoly over the use of force (Holmqvist, 2005:8). Some security providers such as the Mapogo a

Matamaga and outlaws security services often use force to get confessions from suspects (Von Schnitzler, Ditlhage, Kgalema, Maepa, Mofokeng, Pigou, 2001:15). A recent incident in Johannesburg saw a supermarket in the central business district (CBD) 'calling a private security company, rather than the police, to handle criminal suspects. Five people were injured when security guards opened fire (Moselakgomo, 2012:1). This highlights some of the potential dangers arising from the state's lack of monopoly of violence.

Economist Dawie Roodt said that "One of government's primary roles is to enforce law and order and it is not fulfilling this function" and for this reason "taxpayers are basically paying double for protection" (Roodt cited in Masote, 2011:1). Roodt adds that the reality in South Africa and indeed across the world is that many are willing to pay double for security (though it is possible to deduct the costs of security off your tax if your home is also a business (Masie, 2008).[1] The fact that citizens are prepared to obtain 'peace at a price' (Masote, 2011:1) seems to suggest that in the public discourse the state is not the sole agency that guarantees security within its borders. The irony of it all is that the state itself has come to rely on the security services offered by non-state entities in the form of PSC. Some of the observations I made during my study include security guards employed by PSC guarding police stations and public hospitals in Johannesburg. These developments seem to suggest that even the state itself recognises the possibility that it is not the only provider of security and thus no longer has monopoly over this area. The state relies on the services of the PSI to beef up its own capacity and ability to protect its citizens (Holmqvist, 2005).

[1] Section 11A of the Income Tax Act allows for tax deductions for private security if they are not of a capital nature. They must be part of the annual and monthly recurring expenses of the business, though depreciation might also apply.

There is some ambiguity from the state relating to the growth of the PSI. While it recognises the potential of the PSI to assist in the fight against crime, it seems to have concerns about the PSI becoming an alternative source of power (Holmqvist, 2005). Concerns regarding alternative sources of power and the threat they may pose to national security were raised at the summit of the main employer representative in the sector, the SIA in 2011. The main issue is the dominance of foreign multinational conglomerates such as G4S, ADT and Chubb in the South African PSI. Minister of Police Nathi Mthetwa, highlighted that a new bill seeking to introduce 'more stringent penalties for non-compliant companies' will also "ensure strategic limitation and prohibition of foreign control of the industry" (Mthetwa, 2011, cited in Mjikeliso, 2011:1). These concerns are not without contradictions. The sectoral determination places restrictions against the employment of foreign nationals in the industry, yet at the same time foreign companies dominate the industry and government policies also encourage foreign investments.

The development of the PSI in South Africa

According to Berg (2007:8) the development of the PSI in South Africa can be linked to several factors that have arisen since the late 1980s. These include: 'the rise of insecurities associated with apartheid activities, the willingness of the apartheid state to allow the PSI to operate alongside state police, the apartheid state's attempt to professionalise the industry through the enactment' of a legislative framework such as the Security Officers Act of 1987 (Berg, 2007:8).

According to Segbers, Raiser, Volkmann (2005:264) the democratic transition of 1994 witnessed significant growth in the size of the industry. This growth had already begun in the early 1990s, initially at a rate of 30% annually. The massive rise in private property created the

need for it to be protected and secured (Segbers, Raiser, Volkmann, 2005:264). These developments have also seen the 'rise of gated communities or security villages, which propel consumerism and commodification of private security' (Beale, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002:175). The use of private security is often regarded as a class-based issue, only accessed by the more affluent sections within society. While this may well be the dominant case, it is not only the wealthy who barricade themselves behind protective barriers (Beale, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002:175). Another factor propelling the growth of the PSI is 'responsibilization', which refers to statements by the state encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own safety and security. The steady entrance of ex-combatants into the industry has also contributed to the expansion of the industry. For de-mobilised ex-combatants, the PSI provided an avenue through which their skills in combat and defence may be transferred (Cock, 2004:1-9).

One of the key factors that caused the post-1994 boom of the PSI is the extensive liberalisation of cross-border inflow of capital, which sought to encourage the global inflow of investment in South Africa (Mohamed, 2003:5). In other words, states have played a key role in the globalisation of the PSI through the policies they implement. GEAR, implemented by the ANC in 1996, makes it clear why foreign investments must be encouraged. In relation to foreign investments, the policy states; "The integrity of this growth strategy is therefore dependent on maintaining a favourable investment climate, in order to attract foreign investment" (Department of Finance, 1996:6).

Neo-liberal globalisation has created avenues for global private security conglomerates (G4S and so forth) not only to enter, but also dominate markets wherever they go. South Africa's adoption of neo-liberal policies and the prevailing social conditions of rising insecurities of safety has made the country an attractive site for investment for PSCs (Daniele, 2007).

Crime and the growth of the private security industry

"There is no society that is not confronted with the problem of criminality … It is a factor in public health, an integral part of all healthy societies (Durkheim, 1895, cited in Marsh, 2006).

South Africa remains a global wonder because of the relatively peaceful negotiated transition it made from an era marked with apartheid brutality to the democratic dispensation (Louw, 1997:137). However, one of the daunting features of this transition and transformation process since the dawn of democracy has been and continues to be high levels of crime and violence in post-apartheid South Africa (Shaw, 1995 cited in Louw, 1997:138). These acts of criminality and violence have significant implications for the social and psychological outlook of the population at large, but also for the state and security forces. These consequences are far-reaching and bear implications for the state of security/insecurity and quality of life lived by many South Africans (Louw, 1997:138). High crime rates fuel feelings of insecurity and undermine the population's confidence in the virtues of the transformation process and the birth of democracy (Louw, 1997:138). These feelings may lead to the withdrawal of confidence invested in the public sphere to provide security and may encourage seeking out alternative means of addressing these potential threats (Louw, 1997:138).

A widely held view in the South African discourse is that crime in the country increased suddenly during 1994, which suggests that the government and the SAPS was failing to bring the situation under control (Louw, 1997:138). Louw (1997:138-139) shows that crime trends based on police data challenge the perceptions of crime in South Africa. Crime levels have been on the rise since the 1980s, with 1990 experiencing the most dramatic increase in crime rather than 1994, as is widely believed (Louw, 1997:145). He shows that crime trends do confirm that crime

increased during the transition, however what is important is that crime escalated remarkably four years before the new government came into power (Louw, 1997:1).

Perceptions of crime and victimhood play a crucial role in shaping people's levels of safety on the streets, in their businesses, homes and on the roads in their cars. This is further compounded by a lack of public confidence in the state's capacity to protect its population (Beale, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002). According to Matshedisho (2011) communities in South Africa disregard the police. Police officials are perceived as cowards who do not care, who 'rely on backup for their own confidence' and 'are just as corrupt and criminal as the suspects' (Matshedisho, 2011:228). Their morality is continuously brought into question and their sincerity often doubted (Matshedisho, 2011:228). Cock (2004) shows that high levels of crime, insecurity and the perceived failure of public security services to provide adequate protection to citizens are some of the key drivers of the growth of the PSI.

Many South Africans rely on the PSC for their protection. Cock (2004:9) speaks of "privatized militarism", referring to a 'host of cultural practices and social activities, which involve systematic and extensive reliance on numerous non-state organised forms, expressions and instruments of violence' (Cock, 2004:7). Low levels of faith in the rule of law and the corrupt nature of the state's institutions of criminal justice inherited from the apartheid era and increasing forms of criminal violence have opened up a space for the commodification (Cock, 2004:1) of security or "privatization of security" (Cock, 2004:8).

The *Crime Quarterly* indicates that there was an overall rise in crimes nationally, for the 2009/2010 financial year. Burger, Gould, Newham (2010: 1-3) note that these increases are 'driven by the rise in five categories of crime, which are all property related: shoplifting

(increased by 32% or 21 642 cases), commercial crime (increased by 30% or 19 556 cases), residential crime (increased by 8% or 18 724 cases), business burglaries (increased by 14% or 8 778 cases), and theft from motor vehicles (increased by 8% or 9 201 cases). Furthermore they note that during the same period, murder decreased by 8.9% (or 1 653 cases) and attempted murder decreased by 7.4% (or 1 385 cases), assault with intent to inflict serious bodily harm reduced by 2.3% (or 4 811 cases) and aggravated robbery reduced by 3.9% (or 4 557 cases)'. 'Aggravated robbery, which comprises seven subcategories, namely street robbery, car hijacking, truck hijacking, cash-in-transit robbery, bank robbery, house robbery, and business robbery, remains a significant crime threat to all sectors in South Africa' (Burger, Gould, Newham, 2010:1–4).

Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002) argue that due to their often violent nature, 'robberies have a huge impact on perceptions of safety and also have a significant economic impact (direct – stolen cash and property, or indirect – cost of security, insurance and negative impact on investments)'. 'The fact that crime in South Africa is riddled with violence creates possibilities for exaggerated fear of crime' (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002:177). According to Burger, Gould and Newham (2010) the '2009/10 statistics suggest that levels of 'trio crimes' (house robbery, business robbery, and car hijacking) have stabilised after a substantial year-on-year increase since 2003/04'. Globally, most urban crimes are property related and South African statistics follow these patterns (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002:177). Gauteng has the highest crime rates in South Africa and the 'province records half of the national totals of trio crimes' (Burger, Gould and Newham, 2010:5–8).

National victim surveys conducted since 1998 indicate that robbery is a type of crime that is most likely to cause a decline in feelings and perceptions of safety (Burger, Gould and

Newham, 2010:6). The South African government's concern over crime in the country is reflected in the substantial increases in the budget of the SAPS and the recruitment of more than 60 000 police personnel (increase of 44.4%). 'Between 2004 and 2010, the police budget was increased by almost 132% from R22.7-billion to R52.6-billion. A large portion of this budget went towards recruiting additional personnel' (Burger, Gould and Newham, 2010:6).

These efforts have indeed improved visible policing, high density of policing, effective and targeting investigations (Burger, Gould and Newham, 2010:10). The 2009/10 statistics suggest that more policing alone is insufficient; smarter and more accountable policing is crucial if positive changes in the level of crime and the public's confidence in the police is to improve (Burger, Gould and Newham, 2010:11). Acknowledging the low confidence levels of the public in the police, General Bheki Cele remarked on 14 September 2010 that "there is a strong perception that the police were the last resort for those who failed at everything else" (cited in Burger, Gould and Newham, 2010:9). Despite the massive shifts in resources and personnel from the South African Defence Force (SADF) towards the police, insecurity around safety persists and contributes to the rapid growth of the PSI (Cock,2004:8).

The PSI industry is the fastest growing industry and occupation in South Africa (Conradie cited in Masote, 2011), especially in Gauteng, which represents over 36% of the PSI (PSIRA, 2011). According to Conradie, the CEO of the SIA "the sector is the biggest employer of entry-level candidates into the work force in SA" (Masote, 2011:1).

The growth of the industry is uneven across the different categories in the industry. Growth is primarily concentrated in guarding activities and armed response, which are mainly property related (PSIRA, 2004-2011). The growth of the sector follows crime trends.

Johannesburg city is renowned as the crime capital of South Africa, with more than one-third of the crimes being property-based (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002:176–7). The growth of the industry has to be understood in relation to the categories in which crime is more concentrated. The high level of property crime has led to increased insecurity in homes. Many houses and business in Johannesburg have the "ubiquitous armed response signs and a collective paranoia about security" (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002:175). Fear of being murdered, robbed or even assaulted at home, creates a great deal of concern for many people. These concerns are a key factor driving the expansion of the PSI (Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002).

Glans (1995 cited in Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, 2002) notes that across the world, crime rates are higher in cities than in rural areas. 'Crime tends to increase with the size of the city. Factors associated with high crime rates in cities as opposed to small towns include: greater population density, increased opportunities for crime, urbanisation and overcrowding, unemployment, gang activity and the availability of firearms'. Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell, (2002) believe that these factors along with the history of political violence, rapid urbanisation and the related dynamics associated with the breakdown of apartheid cities accounts for the high crime rates in Gauteng.

Size and scope of the PSI

A state-established, but independent body called the PSIRA regulates the South African PSI. PSIRA was established by and exercises its powers and duties as provisioned by the Security Industry Regulatory Authority Act, 56 of 2001. PSIRA replaced the Security Officers Board (SOB) due to collusion with big security companies and the main employers' body in the 1990s (Makgetla, 2007:12). As the main regulatory body in the PSI, PSIRA's functions as outlined by

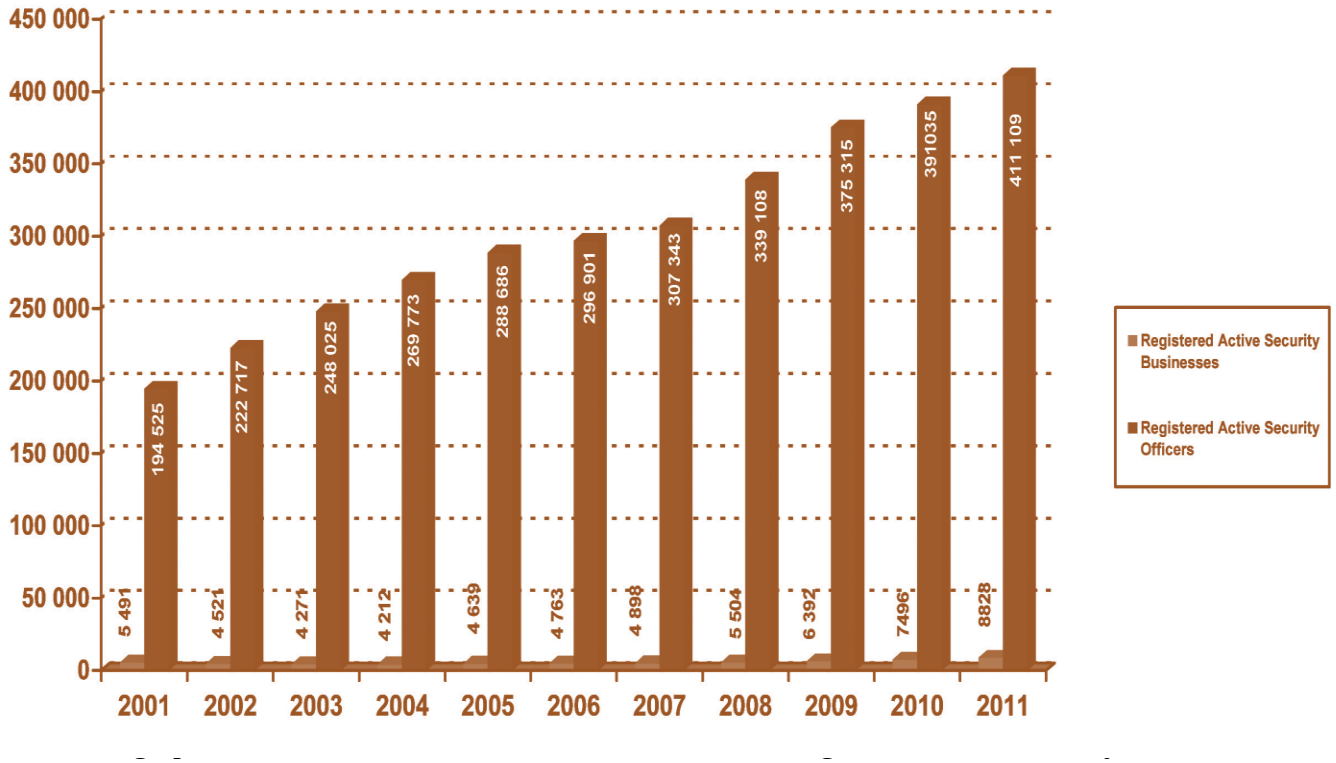
the Act include: regulating the PSI and exercising effective control over the practices of employers and employees in the industry. The entity seeks to ensure that all those participating in the PSI whether as employers and employees are registered with PSIRA. PSIRA seeks to promote professionalism, transparency, accountability, equity and accessibility, stability and cooperation in the industry. The entity also conducts processes of active monitoring, collects information and conducts inspections and investigates the affairs of service providers. It seeks to promote and ensure compliance with existing legislation in the industry. Where legislation is violated, PSIRA has law enforcement powers and can make arrests of unregistered companies and unregistered guards operating in the industry. It can also impose penalties or even deregister non-compliant companies (Department of Labour, 2001).

Some commentators argue that PSIRA lacks the capacity needed to exercise effective control and regulation over the PSI. Firstly, they argue that PSIRA does not have enough inspectors to carry out effective regulation. PSIRA, they argue cannot police the large number of security companies that are non-compliant. The entity has weak screening mechanisms that fail to prevent people with criminal records from entering the industry (Makgetla, 2007:16).

During the 2009/2010 financial year, PSIRA was beset with organisational challenges relating to accusations of maladministration and corruption. The organisational crisis diagnostic report released by the now director, Manabela Chauke, identified several problem areas that required immediate attention in order to place PSIRA back on an efficient and effective regulatory path. The report highlights the poor state of financial affairs and poor staff morale in some of the emergency areas (PSIRA, 2011:5)

South Africa's PSI is one of the largest in the world. Kenya, which has one of the largest PSI in Africa with just over 2 000 PSC, employs just over 20 000 security officers (Williams and Abrahamsen, 2005: 6). These figures do not begin to tell the story of South Africa. In 2005, South Africa had 4 639 PSCs which employed an estimated 288 666 employees (Bar graph 1) There are over 20 524 registered PSC, 8 828 of which are active (PSIRA, 20110. These employ over 411 109 security officers. In the 2010/2011 financial year, PSIRA received over 1 416 applications for new security businesses (PSIRA, 2011). Evidently, the industry has become an avenue for new entrepreneurial ventures. This is mainly because of the profitability of the industry. However, some employers argue that the industry is not doing as well as the figures suggest. They claim that the struggle is over the size of the pie rather than real growth (Makgetla, 2007:13). Between 2007 and 2011, the industry increased its annual revenue by an estimated R10-billion from R40-billion. The employer organisation, SIA estimate a current annual turnover of R50-billion (SIA interview, 2011).

Bar graph 1 below shows the increase in the number of PSC and employees from 2001 to 2011.



(PSIRA annual report, 2011)

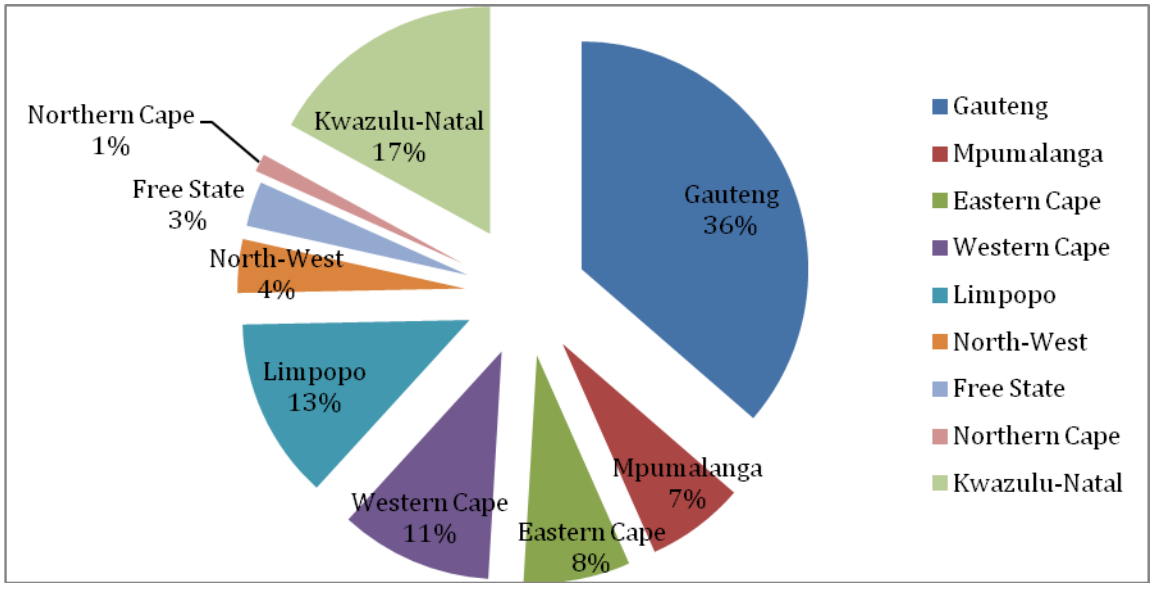
Table 2 provides a provincial breakdown of the registered PSCs in South Africa. It compares three financial years; 2008/2009, 2009/2010, 2010/2011. The majority of registered active PSCs operate in Gauteng (PSIRA, 2011).

Table 2: Provincial breakdown of registered PSCs in South Africa

Region/province	Number of active registered businesses		
	2009	2010	2011
Gauteng	2 374	2 722	3 202
Mpumalanga	450	513	616
Eastern Cape	473	596	669
Western Cape	741	813	956
Limpopo	819	981	1 135
North-West	256	289	335
Free State	215	255	281
Northern Cape	82	91	112
KwaZulu-Natal	982	1 199	1 502
Total	6 392	7 459	8 828

(PSIRA annual reports 2009/2010 and 2010/2011)

The 2011 column shows that an estimated 3 202 registered active security companies operate in Gauteng. This represents over 36% of all registered and active PSCs in South Africa. I show cross-provincial 2011 percentages in the pie-chart (chart 2) below using data provided by PSIRA (2011).



(PSIRA annual report, 2011)

Categories of security service provision

According to PSIRA (2011) the PSI is divided into several categories of security service providers. These include commercial, industrial, residential guarding or patrolling, assets in transit, car watch activities, armed-reaction or response services, and safety promotion during events (sports, parties etc). There is also in-house monitoring of signals from control rooms, consultancy and advisory activities, close protection services, installation and repair brokers, locksmiths and private investigators, security training activities and labour brokers. A single PSC may be registered and active in a number of different categories at the same time (PSIRA, 2011).

There has been a steady and consistent rise in most of the categories of security businesses and security officers. Table 3 is a presentation of three financial years: 2008/2009, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011.

Table 3: PSC growth over three financial years

Category of security service	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**
Registered active armed response businesses	2 083	2 721	2 836
Registered active cash-in-transit businesses	1 694	2 204	2 300
Registered active guarding businesses	4 862	5 784	6 324
Registered active security businesses	6 392	7 496	8 828
Registered active security officers	375 315	391 035	411 109
Registered inactive security officers	940 330	1 070267	136 9765

(PSIRA annual reports, 2008/2009, 2009/2010 and 2010/2011)

The number of active registered guarding businesses has increased from 5 784 during the 2009/2010 financial year to 6 324 in the 2010/2011 financial year. This represents an increase of

9.34%. The guarding category is the biggest with over 6324 PSC offering the service. The number of cash-in-transit businesses has increased from 2 204 during the 2010/2011 financial year to 2 300, which is an increase by 96 cash-in-transit businesses, representing a rise of 4.36%. The number of registered active armed response businesses has increased from 2 721 during the 2009/2010 financial year to 2 836 during the 2010/2011 financial year, representing an increase of 155 armed response businesses or 4.23% (PSIRA, 2011). Guarding represents over 70% of the industry. The guarding category is the biggest and contributes an estimated R18-billion to the overall annual industrial turnover, which is estimated at R50-billion (Interview, SIA, 2011).

The ECC report of 2009 indicates that there has been gradual movement towards greater utilisation of electronic surveillance (ECC, 2009:8). This shift could have an impact on employment in the sector. Table 4 provides 'some indication of the spread of electronic surveillance and its relative market share' (ECC, 2009:8). Given that the growth of employment in the sector continues unabated, 'it would be important to establish whether the shift towards electronic surveillance is as great as employers are arguing' (ECC, 2009:8).

Table 4: Electronic security services and the proportion of total market value of each sector

Market	**Proportion (percentage) of total market value of electronic security services**
Public sector	10
Commercial	29.8
Industrial	19.5
Domestic	38.3
Unspecified	2

(ECC report, 2009:7–8)

The PSI is a very competitive industry consisting of thousands of registered companies offering a package of diverse security services. On a daily basis, these companies compete to secure market share. They compete for patrolling, guarding and cash-in-transit contracts (ECC, 2009:16). Despite the rampant competition and the exponential growth of the industry, it is

heavily dominated by a few multinational companies (Williams and Abrahamsen, 2005). The South African PSI, like many other less developed countries (LDCs), such as Kenya and Mozambique, are dominated by major international PSC (Williams and Abrahamsen, 2005). Table 5 indicates the estimated annual turnover of each company, business portfolio, number of employees and ownership of seven dominant PSC in the PSI.

Table 5: The top seven PSI market players in terms of revenue

Company	**Revenue Rm 2009**	**Business portfolio**	**Employees**	**Ownership**
Fidelity	R1,742.5m	Professional security service provider, whose services include: • guarding services • reaction services • mining security services • electronic security • risk analysis	33 000	Khulani Holdings: 25.45%; New Seasons: 25.5%; Eagle Creek Investments 393 (Pty) Ltd: 15.86%; Corvest 6 (Pty) Ltd: 13%; Dickerson Investments: 13%; Share Participation Trust: 4.39%; The Guarding Trust: 2.71%
G4S	R750.0m	Operations are carried out through three divisions, namely: • security services • security systems • o cash and valuables transportation	13 130	G4S Plc: 74%; Kagiso Ventures Ltd: 13%; Staff Trust: 13%
Protea Coin	R1,321.0m	Operates as a security company, through five divisions	15 500	Mvelaphanda Group Ltd via Mvelaserve Ltd: 100%
Gremick		Provides security services, which include: • guarding services • electronic security • VIP protection services	5 500	Servest Holdings Ltd: 100% (Held by Management: 50.9%; Safika Investments (Pty) Ltd: 26%; RMB Corvest (Pty) Ltd: 14.3%; Servest Staff Incentive Trust: 8.8%)
Enforce	R350.0m		8 000	Mr SJ Ncube: 52%; Mr CJ Phipps: 12%; Mr AP Feuilherade: 12%; Mr DG Lategan: 12%; Mr DC Birkett: 12%
ADT		Security company: • provides 24-hour armed response & monitoring services • installs alarm systems and supplies and installs fire protection equipment • BEE partner, ADT/Kusela Security Solutions	10 500	Tyco International Luxembourg S.A.R.L: 100%

		• Provides comprehensive guarding services		
Magnum	R433.2m	Industrial security firm supplying • security manpower. • security systems analysis, investigation & undercover investigation	8 678	The Bidvest Group Ltd: 100%

(Sala, in Rees 2011:1–3)[2]

According to Conradie (2011) A key challenge facing the industry is the number of unknown and unregistered PSC (fly-by-night companies), employing an unknown number of security officers who are denied the minimum conditions of employment set out in the legislation. The view of the SIA (2011) is that the activities of unscrupulous non-compliant companies are having a 'negative impact on the industry's image' and they undermine efforts by various stakeholders to improve employment standards in the PSI. They usually do not pay the minimum wages and do not provide benefits to workers. By undercutting the market price, these non-compliant companies make it 'extremely difficult for compliant companies to compete fairly' (Conradie, 2011, cited in Masote, 2011:1).

The unknown number of unregistered PSC and unregistered security officers suggests that we simply do not know exactly how large the industry is. These unregulated activities in the sector present a particular challenge to the accuracy of the projected size and scope of the PSI. However, the difficulty of obtaining consistent and reliable information about the industry is not a challenge peculiar to South Africa.

[2] The table incorrectly says top five companies when there are seven and the revenue for Gremick and ADT are missing from the table.

A survey of the industry produced by the trade union MATSA (the Managerial, Administrative, Technical and Supervisory Association, which is part of the GMBATU) in Great Britain noted: "There are no reliable figures of the size of the security industry. It is rapidly changing, partly seasonal and, of course, there are a number of very small companies about whom it is hard to get any information at all" (MATSA, 1983:3, cited in South, 1988:23).

Employment in the PSI

The global growth of the PSI has transformed it into a major employer, absorbing thousands of people who may have otherwise remained unemployed. G4S, which is a UK multinational and one of the dominant PSC in the world, operating in over 100 countries on six continents, employed approximately 500 000 temporary and permanent employees in 2006 in the UK alone. This gave it the status of largest employer listed on the London Stock Exchange (Daniele, 2007:41).

In Kenya, the PSI has created thousands of new jobs. The top three PSC, G4S (10 000), KK Security (5 000), and Group Security (3 800) have collectively created over 18 000 new jobs (Williams and Abrahamsen, 2005:6). In 2007, G4S had spread its operations in 18 African countries, creating over 82 079 new jobs; 8 615 where created in Mozambique (Daniele, 2007:43). In South Africa, global conglomerates like G4S, Chubb, ADT, Magnum, Protea Coin and Fidelity, alongside thousands of competitive small players in the industry have created thousands of new jobs.

There are currently 411 109 registered and active security guards, operating broadly across the three categories of the industry (guarding, armed response, and cash in transit)

(PSIRA, 2011). If the organisational structure is used to 'extrapolate to all occupations in the industry, total employment expands well over 545 000 employees' (SASSETA, 2010:6).

Active private security guards totalled 115 331 in 1997, 288 686 in 2005, 391 035 in 2010 and 411 109 in 2011. Significant growth in the sector occurred between 1997 and 2005, during which the number of security officers deployed in the industry increased by over 145% (PSIRA, 2009).

Gauteng is the leading province in the country, not only in terms of registered active companies but also registered active security officers. Over 39% of employment in the industry is concentrated in Gauteng and Johannesburg. Of the 387 273 registered active security officers in 2010, approximately 151 999 were in Gauteng (PSIRA, 2010).

Table 6 provides a provincial breakdown of employment in the industry between 2009 and 2010.

Table 6: Provincial breakdown of employment in the PSI between 2009 and 2010

Province	**2009**	**2010**
Gauteng	149 902	151 991
Mpumalanga	26 301	27 212
Eastern Cape	32 698	34 494
Western Cape	34 567	36 461
Limpopo	24 710	25 636
North- West	25 120	25 684
Free State	15 814	16 189
Northern Cape	4 161	4 283
KwaZulu-Natal	62 042	65 323
Total	375 315	387 273

(PSIRA, 2009/2010)

Grading

Employment in the PSI is organised according to several grades. The rates of remuneration per hour differ with respect to area (PSIRA, 2011). The minimum wages for the Gauteng Province are listed in Table 7.

Table 7: Minimum wages per grade for Gauteng Province

Grades for security officers	Monthly basic salary	Hourly equivalent	Maximum permissible working hrs per week, subject to clause 5(2) with regards to average working hrs
Grade A	R 3. 658	R 17.59	48
Grade B	R 3. 211	R 15.44	
Grade C	R 2.691 367	R 12.94	
Grade D	R 2. 519	R 12.11	

(PSIRA, 2011)

The Sectoral Determination: Private Security Sector (SD6) is a law that regulates the conditions of employment such as hours of work, leave and minimum wages employers in the sector are required to pay security officers (Department of Labour, 2001). The law covers all registered and active security guards operating in any of the three categories (Department of Labour, 2001).

Security guards in the private security sector have salary scales ranging from A to D. Levels D and C are usually for guarding, B for armed response and supervisors, and A for cash-in-transit and managers. In area 1, which includes the Gauteng Province, night shifts (18:00 to 6:00) earn R5 per shift. I outline the minimum wages for the private security sector in Gauteng as set out by the department of labour. Table 7 covers the following areas: Alberton, Bellville, Benoni, Boksburg, Brakpan, Germiston, Inanda, Johannesburg, Kempton Park, Krugersdorp, Nigel, Pretoria, Randburg, Randfontein, Roodepoort, Springs, Vanderbijlpark, Vereeniging, Westonaria, Wonderboom and Wynberg. Table 7 outlines the illustrative contract pricing structure for the period 1 September 2011 to 31 August 2012 (PSIRA, 2011). According SD6, annual increments are scheduled for 1 September each year.

SATAWU wants employers in the PSI to phase out the area grade system, which they say is designed to marginalise black security guards (Interview, Jackson: 2011). The majority of security guards are in grades E, D and C, while their white counterparts tend to be in grades A and B. They argue that the wage system in the PSI is based on the 1956 laws, which were formulated in military style (Interview, Jackson: 2011). The union wants this old system to be scrapped so that all employees across the colour bar can get entry level salary of not less that R3 000 a month (Interview, Jackson: 2011). However, Kevin Derrick of the Security Services Employer Organisation argued that labour's high demands are not economically feasible for employers because 75% of PSC revenue go to workers' salaries (Letsoalo, 2009:1)

Industrial relations in the PSI

The SD6, South Africa was published in the government gazette of 30 November 2001 and is the main piece of legislation in the PSI (ECC, 2009:1).

One of the main challenges in the security industry is the low union density and the absence of a national bargaining council (Makgetla, 2007:25). The sector is characterised by 'fluidity in the bargaining structure' (Makgetla, 2007:25). It is reported that attempts to form an industrial council were made in 1986, but failed because of low union representation (Makgetla, 2007). At the time, the South African National Security Employer's Association (SANSEA) was the only employer's organisation and the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), now SATAWU, the largest union (Makgetla, 2007). Another attempt to establish a national bargaining council was made in 1996, but it failed again due to low representivity (Makgetla,

2007). To set conditions of employment in the sector, the Department of Labour holds hearings and 'sets wage minima under the wage board system' (Makgetla, 2007:26). The sector relies on a forum with a constitution that bargains collectively on conditions of employment and wages. Unions and employers drafted the constitution of this forum. 'The constitution allows each party to determine their representation in the forum using a formula for their caucus' (Makgetla, 2007:27). Makgetla (2007:27) states that the forum consists of 12 representatives from each of organised business and organised labour to bargain on conditions of employment based on proportional representivity. The parties to this forum are, however, not representative of the industry as a whole. 'Since the promulgation of SD6, the parties first negotiate in a formally constituted negotiating forum' (ECC, 2009:1). The ECC (200:9:1) report states that 'agreement reached in the Bargaining Forum then becomes the basis of discussion in the ECC where it is tested against the requirements set out in the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA)'. The criteria entail things such as:

a. The ability of employers to carry on their business successfully.
b. The operation of small, medium or micro-enterprises.
c. The cost of living.
d. The alleviation of poverty.
e. Wage differentials and inequality.
f. The impact on current and the creation of new employment.

(ECC, 2009:2)

'The primary purpose of the forum is to promote collective bargaining. The terms of agreement are accepted only if they meet the criteria set out in the BCEA' (ECC, 2009:2). Continued attempts to form a bargaining council are still underway even to date. In 2005, the

Department of Labour conducted a verification exercise to determine whether levels of representivity have reached the required threshold (ECC, 2009:1–2). The result was that representivity was still too low and therefore no bargaining council can be formed (Makgetla, 2007:27). In 2008, another verification exercise was carried out by the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), it confirmed that representivity was still very low at about 18% (Rees, 2011:6-7). The number of registered and active security guards in 2008, according to the report was estimated at 387 544. Total unionisation was about 69 000, with about 44 898 represented by SATAWU and 24 380 belonging to the other unions in the sector (Rees, 2011:6–8). The CCMA verification process of 2008 found that, collectively other unions excluding SATAWU amounted to a membership of 24 380. Alone, SATAWU's membership was estimated to be 44 898 (Rees, 2009: 6). This brings estimated unionisation to 69 000. However, 69 000 only reflects 18% of the PSI which had 387 544 registered and active security guards (Rees, 2011:6-7). In 2011, the CCMA conducted another verification exercise, but the results indicate representatively has not yet been achieved. The results of the exercise are summed up in Table 8.

Table 8: Trade union membership

Trade union	Membership	Percentage (%)
SATAWU	34 510	42.70
KAWU	12 482	15.44
NASUWU	9 539	11.80
PTAWU	7 031	8.70
SANSAWF	5 691	7.04
DUSWO	5 210	6.45
SAPSWU	2 081	2.57
UASA	1 578	1.95
FOCSWU	803	0.99
PROWU	686	0.85
UPSWU	645	0.80
NDCAWU	321	0.40

HOTELLICA	115	0.14
SACSAAWU	105	0.13
COWUSA	31	0.04
SOCRAWU	N/A	N/A
TAWUSA	N/A	N/A
MAWU	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	80 828	100

(CCMA, 2011)

Table 9: Employers' organisation membership

Employer's organisation	**Member employee complement**	**Percentage (%)**
SSOE	80 932	59.94
SANSEA	52 882	39.17
SAIDSA	N/A	N/A
COSAPS	1 206	0.89
TOTAL	135 020	100

(CCMA, 2011)

Some analysts argue that the 2006 security industry resembled the militancy and violence of the 1980s (Makgetla, 2007). During the strike a compromise was reached in which five employer associations and 16 trade unions began to negotiate under the CCMA with the expectation that their agreement would form part of the minister's determination (Makgetla, 2007). The strike dragged on because of the sectoral determination and the collective bargaining model. Employers believed that further negotiations could be bypassed by a determination. The relative representation of each bargaining party was not firmly established and SATAWU drew on the principle of majoritarianism to argue that their demands must be upheld. Six months into

talks, negotiations deadlocked and 16 unions announced a two-day national strike on 23 and 24 March 2006 (Makgetla, 2006:4).

Unions demanded an 11% wage increase and an additional 4% increase for the lowest paid. They also demanded four months maternity leave on full pay, five days annual leave on full pay, five days study leave and an increase in the provident fund. On 1 April, 14 unions that had combined in order to form majority and sideline SATAWU signed an agreement with employers that gave workers an 8.3% wage increase. SATAWU and the Transport Allied Workers Union (TAWU) did not sign the agreement and continued with the strike, making the same demands (Makgetla, 2006:5).

SATAWU argued that the agreement could not lay down the basis for the minister's determination because the majority union did not sign it. Employers argued that the combination of the 14 unions formed the majority, and not SATAWU. This situation was allowed by the absence of a national bargaining council that would have clearly defined relative representation. Employers approached the court to declare the SATAWU and TAWU strike illegal, but the court ruled in favour of SATAWU declaring the strike protected and SATAWU as the majority union. On 11 May, employers began to entertain serious thought about entering into dialogue with the two striking unions (Makgetla, 2006: 5).

Nakanyane (1999) found that processes of unionisation among private security guards were linked to the difficult conditions under which they worked. Workers' experience of work is not de-linked from the desire among workers to form combinations (Hyman, 1971: 6). However, unions in the PSI face difficulties in organising. This is due to several dynamics of the industry.

First, employment in the security industry is contract-based and the industry is characterised by high turnover of employees. Security companies often get tenders, when these tenders come to an end, the union has to re-organise workers again. The second challenge is the 'use of illegal immigrants' who are often 'reluctant' to join because they feel relatively more vulnerable and avoid causing any problems for 'themselves at work' (Makgetla, 2007:29). Third, employers are very anti-union and they find means to discourage workers from joining unions (Makgetla, 2007:29).

Nakanyane (1999) identified the security sector as one that reflected a remarkable growth in unionisation in South Africa. He argued that the unions in the PSI can cope with these conditions if they develop new strategies to recruit members. He argues that the effectiveness of union organising strategies depend partly on how well unions are integrated into their communities. Nakanyane (1999) believes that unions should build alliances with non-union members and influence them to join unions by working closely with communities and political organisations. Buti (2010) suggests one way to achieve this is through integration. He suggests that security guards cannot construct links with communities because they are not active in their respective communities. Instead, he argues that a strategy premised on symbolic leverage would enable workers to build alliances with communities in order to challenge capital.

Using Chun's framework of symbolic leverage, Buti (2010:17) argues that SATAWU can learn from the South Africa Commercial, Catering and Allied Workers Union (SACCAWU), 'which managed to successfully mobilise casual workers through media publicity'. SATAWU, he suggests, could develop strategies that will utilise different power dynamics in favour of contract workers. He argues that 'employer violation of workers' rights may be exposed through

the media, a move which could be achieved by forming alliances with community organisations and social movements' (Buti, 2010:17). 'Women on Farms provide such an example, by being linked with Oxfam, and continue to expose unfair labour, social, environmental rights violation through UK and South African media (Kritzinger, Barrientos and Rossouw, 2004). Thus, symbolic power is crucial in that it gives the unorganised such as contract workers a voice and recognition and may stimulate collective action, attract public attention, culminating in the formation of organisations and allying with existing social movements' (Chun 2009 cited in Buti, 2010:17).

Unionisation levels remain significantly low. The Gauteng Decent Work Survey (DWS, 2011) found that only 16% of security guards in Gauteng belonged to a union (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b). This figure is similar to the 18% nation-wide unionisation found by NALEDI (Rees, 2011:6-7). According to this survey, 10% belonged to other organisations representing workers. The three top organisations, according to the DWS are SATAWU (39%), Scorpion (22%) and LegalWise (16%). This suggests that some security guards prefer legal firms to union representation (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b).

Makgetla (2007) noted that the majority of SATAWU'S membership is concentrated in Gauteng, followed by KwaZulu-Natal and Western Cape. Concentration of union membership varies according to the demographics of the PSI. Many PSC are located and operate in Gauteng (Makgetla, 2007:28). SATAWU is affiliated to the biggest trade union federation in South Africa, COSATU. The Professional Transport Workers Union (PTWU), the National Security Workers Union (NASWU), as well as the National Democratic Change and Affiliated Workers

Union (NDCAWU) are affiliated to the second largest union federation, the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA) (Makgetla, 2007:28).

Makgetla (2007: 30) notes that, in the absence of a national bargaining council, the minister of labour declares amendments to the sectoral determination in terms of the BCEA. The ECC holds hearings and accepts submissions from different role-players in the industry. From these processes, a report is formulated. This report informs the amendments that may be promulgated by the minister of labour (Makgetla, 2007:30). Agreements between labour and employers reached in the forum only form one part of the process. The significance of this forum partly derives from the fact that parties are provided space to try and influence the outcomes of the ministers' determination. However, there is no 'guarantee that the agreements will form part of the final determination' (Makgetla, 2007:30). The minister's say supersedes the processes of negotiation from the forum. In the past, the practice was that the minister would promulgate the sectoral determination when a minority of employers signed the agreements. This seems to indicate that the 'constitution of the forum is open to more interpretation than would be the case if there were a bargaining council in place' (Makgetla, 2007:30).

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Profile of the research participants (security guards)

I conducted this research in and around Johannesburg. The places I visited include: Braamfontein, Wits University, Cresta, Mellville, Yeoville, Hillbrow, Park Station, Sandton, Fourways, Carleton Centre, Auckland Park, Parktown and Soweto. The security industry consists of several layers of guards. The first layer consists of in-house security guards, such as Campus Control at the University of the Witwatersrand who are directly employed by the university. The second layer consists of self-employed security guards who in the majority tend to be car guards. My research focused on private or outsourced security guards who are employees of PSC, both registered and unregistered. I conducted a total of 30 in-depth interviews. I interviewed 24 security guards, 2 SATAWU union officials, and 2 employers, I also interviewed the CEO of the SIA, Steve Conradie and Stefan Badenhorst who is the manager of the law enforcement division of PSIRA.

I begin this chapter by providing a profile of the security guards I interviewed and I cover the following items: gender, age, place of birth, registered or unregistered, and educational level.

Gender

The research found that the PSI is largely dominated by men. Male security guards formed 87.5% of my respondents while women formed only 12.5%. Responses from female security guards and employers suggest that there are explanations for the low percentage of women in the PSI. I explore some of the explanations in the findings' section.

Table 10: Gender of research participants

Gender	Number	Percentage (%)
Men	21	87.5%
Women	3	12.5%
Total	24	100%

Age

South Africa has a high unemployment rate. According to the narrow definition, which excludes discouraged workers, unemployment is estimated at 25.0% (Stats SA, 2010). Labour market studies in South Africa indicate that the burden of unemployment falls unequally upon the youth. About 42% of young people under the age of 30 are unemployed compared with less than 17% of adults over 30 (National Treasury, 2011:5).

The majority of my participants, 79.16% were aged between 26 and 35 years. Similarly, the Gauteng DWS found that 46% of outsourced workers were aged between 30 and 39 years, while a security company case study in Mozambique found that 56% were youth. However, security guards in their youth did not see the jobs as their career, but rather as a stepping-stone to achieving their childhood goals and dreams. Those aged between 36 and 45 years formed 16.66% of the participants. Only one security guard I Interviewed fell under the age category of 46 to 55.

Table 11: Age of research participants

Age	Number	Percentage (%)
18-25	-	-
26-35	19	79.17%
36-45	4	16.67%
46-55	1	4.17%
Total	24	100%

Place of birth

A common pattern among my participants was that many came from rural areas in South Africa. Most were from Venda and KwaZulu-Natal and the rest came from places like Free State, Mpumalanga (Bushbuckridge), Giyani, Musina and Ga-Kgapane in Limpopo. Foreign nationals I interviewed came from Zimbabwe. Employment opportunities in the PSI are the key reason for migration to Johannesburg. Some of my participants, both South African and foreign, come to Johannesburg with security certificates looking for work in the security industry. A large section of the security guards I interviewed relied on family and friends both for accommodation and finding work in the PSI. Commonly mentioned familial networks include cousins and aunts; 21 security guards or 87.5% were of South African nationality. Foreign nationals from Zimbabwe formed 12.5% of my sample in Johannesburg.

Table 12: Place of birth of research participants

Nationality	Number	Percentage (%)
South African	21	87.5%
Zimbabwean	3	12.5%
Total	24	100%

Registered and unregistered security guards

SD6 of 2001 sets out the basic conditions of employment in the PSI. This piece of legislation stipulates that security guards working in South Africa must be registered with the main regulatory body. The PSIRA is the main regulatory body, established by an act of parliament to exercise effective control over the PSI in South Africa. One of the key legislative requirements is that foreign security guards who do not have permanent residence status should not practice as security guards in South Africa. Twenty (or 83%) of security guards I interviewed were registered. These registered security guards were all South African. On the other hand, four (or 17%) were unregistered. Three (or 12%) were foreign nationals (Zimbabwean) while one (or 5%) was South African.

Table 13: Registered and unregistered research participants

Nationality	**Registered**	**Unregistered**	**Percentage (%) registered**	**Percentage (%) Unregistered**
South African	20	1	83%	5%
Zimbabwean	0	3	0	12%
Total	20	4	83%	17%

Education

The nature of work that security guards do has a relatively low demand for skills (SASSETA, 2010:41). The tasks of security guards include roles such as guarding (patrolling, access control etc), cash-in-transit and armed response (SASSETA, 2010). The majority, 21 (or 85%) of security guards I interviewed did not complete matric. Similarly SASSETA (2010) found that the 71% did not complete matric, 24% had diplomas, and 0.3% obtained a degree while 0.2% obtained a post graduate degree (SASSETA, 2010: V).

A common reason given by my participants for not completing matric was poverty and therefore the need to go and find work to supplement low household income. The PSI offers many job opportunities and has very low barriers to entry and as a result many people come to seek employment in the sector. Only three (or 12.5%) completed matric. One entered tertiary education and registered for a course in human resource management at a college, but did not obtain his diploma.

Table 14: Education levels of research participants

Education level	**Number**	**Percentage (%)**
No formal education	0	0
Incomplete elementary school	0	0
Incomplete high school	21	87.5%
Completed high school	3	12.5%
-	24	100%

The table (14) above marks the end of profiling my participants. The next section goes straight to the texture of the daily lived experiences of those I have profiled. I explore three themes that emerged from my interviews with security guards, in so doing I attempt to stay close as possible to their experiences in order to maintain the authenticity and paint as vivid a picture as possible of their subjective experiences. I begin by exploring three themes; 'Boredom is our daily bread', the uniform and public perceptions, and the crisis of recognition.

"Boredom is our daily bread"

Barbalet (1999:631) defines boredom as a "restless, irritable feeling that the subject's current activity or situation holds no appeal, and that there is a need to get on with something interesting". Boredom is a subjective experience, an 'emotional feeling of anxiety that an activity or situation holds no significance' (Barbalet, 1999:632). Barbalet (1999:631) argues that 'boredom emotionally registers' often as a result of a lack or 'absence of meaning' in the social practices undertaken by individuals or groups in society. Meaning, she argues is vital to social processes (Barbalet, 1999:631). Marx's theory of alienation touches on the dynamic element of boredom but overlooks issues of meaning (Barbalet, 1999:633). Marx (1967 [1844] cited in Barbalet, 1999:633) describes boredom as a central experiential component when he comments about specialised labour under capitalism. "He comments that specialized labor under capitalist conditions 'does not affirm [the workers] but denies [them] … [They] only feel [themselves] outside [their] work, and in [their] work feel outside [themselves]". The meaninglessness and fundamental boredom of alienated labour is emphasised more by Seeman (1961 cited in Barbalet, 1999:633) who argues that the lack of 'intrinsically rewarding activity generates meaninglessness and self-alienation'.

When asking security guards to describe their job, they would often complain about low pay, long hours (standing), and bad treatment from employers and negative perception from the general public. However, the many responses to this question illuminated the experience of excruciating boredom: 96% of my sample thought that the job of a security guard is extremely boring.

"Security job is so boring" (Tafadwa, 18/08/11)

Only one respondent highlighted that a potential benefit of the job is the building of new friendships. This guard, unlike the others, felt that he looks forward to going to work because he has made friends with his colleague(s). He declared that they speak a lot and share life lessons, life experiences and personal problems together and that makes the work experience a lot easier. However, he does not deny that being a security guard is boring. Instead, he chooses to use the social relations and social interaction at work as a way of reducing boredom. These social relations (friendships etc) help to reduce the monotony and repetition which is in the nature of his work (Smith, Lopata, Norr, Barnewolt and Miller, 1985 cited in Barbalet, 1999:639). He likes:

> *"To work with my workmates as a team because when I come to work in the morning, I feel very happy to work with them. I make friends through my job"* (Charles, 15 /09/11)

Security guards experience their work as an extremely, repetitive, boring, lonely, unrewarding, unfulfilling, tiring, strenuous and under-stimulating activity. Some security officers listen to the radio often on their cell-phones as a way of combating the boredom. However, some companies see this as a distraction that may compromise the alertness of security guards and may potentially prevent them from hearing any suspicious sounds that may require their attention. Some guards feel the job denies them to be themselves to appropriate the values that matter to them while at work.

> *"As a normal human being sometimes you want to listen to FM on your earphones. But you are denied that"* (Mandla, 17/09/11)

Although this seems a reasonable position from the employer's side, it is not assisting the guard with combating the experience of boredom. However, music too has its own limitations, as it can only serve as a temporary solution to the excruciating experience of perpetual boredom.

> *"Boredom is our daily bread, it is a lonely job. So boredom is something you cannot run away from. Every-day I just come and sit here. You can play music, but you get tired of it. The night is very lonely – 12 hours is a long time. You just sit there and you think"* (Sipho, 07/08/11)

From the above, it seems boredom can also be experienced due to 'feelings of not being involved or engaged' in the work (Barbalet, 1999:634). The security guard comes and sits/stands at his/her post, without much stimulation from his/her work, he/she can do little else but think. Suttie (1988 [1935] cited in Barbalet, 1999:634) on the other hand sees boredom as more than just a lack of interest, but essentially as the 'opposite of enthusiasm'. Sipho lacks enthusiasm in his work. Another dimension of boredom emerging from Sipho's statement is the distortion of 'time-sense', a subjective experience typically characteristic of boredom (Barbalet, 1999:637): 12 hours is indeed a long time, but for the security guard it may typically mean that time appears to be 'standing still' (Barbalet, 1999:637).

Some security guards proposed possible boredom combating measures, but remained heavily sceptical and doubtful of any realistic prospect of making the job more stimulating and interesting.

> *"This job is too much boring. They should put the plasma [TV] for us, but even that will not help. Maybe you just need to leave [quit the job]. If they increase the salary maybe it will solve the problem"* (Collin, 9/12/11)

The theme of boredom shows that boredom is a common social experience among security guards. Boredom is an experience characterised by irritability, restlessness, dullness, dissatisfaction or lack of vital interest in the job of being a security guard. It may be generated by lack of meaning, monotony and repetition and lack of interest in the job itself (Barbalet, 1999). The work of security guards often entails standing or sitting at a designated post usually for 12 hours, almost as if waiting for something to happen. The experience of boredom seems not to encourage passivity and 'surrender to the conditions that provoke it' (Gaylin, 1979, cited in Barbalet, 1999:634). Security guards are active in their discomfort and are continuously looking for ways to get rid of the boredom or reduce it despite the rather modest possibilities (Gaylin, 1979, cited in Barbalet, 1999:634).

The uniform and public perceptions

The uniform of the security guard and uniforms in general 'play a key role in the delineation of occupational boundaries and the formation of professional identity' and social status (Timmons and East, 2011:1). In day-to-day social practice, the uniform provides a practical way to enact boundaries (Timmons and East, 2011:1). In this way, the uniform is symbolic in nature (Joseph and Alex, 1972:721). Joseph and Alex (1972 cited in Timmons and East, 2011:2) argue that 'uniforms are emblematic, indicate status and legitimacy, but also suppress individuality'. The suppression of individuality ensures that individual conduct is driven by the goals of the organisation rather than the individual's 'attributes and values' (Rafaeli and Praat, 1993:45 cited in Timmons and East, 2011:3). Joseph and Alex (1972 cited in Timmons and East, 2011:2) further argue that 'the uniform is a device to resolve certain dilemmas of complex organisations

– namely, to define their boundaries, to assure that members will conform to their goals, and to eliminate conflicts in the status sets of their members'.

In terms of SD6 PSC are required by law to provide at least two free pairs of uniforms for security guards (Department of Labour, 2001:24). While some companies comply with these regulations, other companies tend to have complicated arrangements ensuring that workers pay for their uniforms. Others are made to pay the full price for second-hand uniforms that are not in good condition.

> *"They gave me an old shirt, the collar was finished and the colour was almost completely washed off. But I paid R800 for the uniform"* (Sipho, 07/08/11)

Other security guards pay a fee of a R100 per month for a uniform.

> *"Every month, they say I pay R100 for a uniform [reflector]"* (Rutendo, 25/10/11)

The uniform of the security guard bears a social significance, it is a precursor of job and social standing. The uniform functions as a marker that distinguishes security guards apart from other people in society (Joseph and Alex, 1972). Their uniform is unlike that of nurses, which symbolise professionalism but instead carries undesirable meanings in the public domain. The uniform not only set boundaries, marking insiders and outsiders but also reproduces hierarchies in society (Rafaeli and Praat, 1993:45 cited in Timmons and East, 2011:14). Even the police uniform, has come to symbolise certain demeaning stereotypes. Matshediso (2011:228) explored township policing and found that people generally view police as functionally illiterate (they did not finish matric). The uniform suppresses individuality and identifies you as a part of a collective, but also gives rise to other forms of identities. The uniform is identified with a group and thus 'assumes the properties of a totem emblem and embodies the attributes of the group'

(Joseph and Alex, 1972:720). In one sense the uniform stands as a representative of the group. The relationship between the uniform and the wearer is reciprocal. Through his conduct, the individual may grace the uniform, or the 'uniform may enhance or denigrate the honour of the wearer' (Joseph and Alex, 1972:720).

My research findings suggest that the uniform of the security guard is not a source of pride and dignity, but a source of indignity and tends to strip away the individual's sense of honour and pride. The technologies that the uniform evokes depend to some degree on the 'prestige accorded to the group' (Joseph and Alex, 1972:720). Where the prestige is relatively low like with security guards, cleaners and so forth, 'it may represent a source of embarrassment rather pride, and or honour. The uniform is symbolic and thus tends to have a life of its own, especially in the eyes of the outsiders (the public) (Joseph and Alex, 1972).

The guard's uniform carries with it a sense of rejection and technologies that give rise to shame. The guard's uniform suppresses the individual, covering his/her individual values and beliefs and identifying him for public scorn and a sight to be mocked (Joseph and Alex, 1972). Since the uniform is symbolic, it provides the symbol of a group towards which certain public attitudes, even by children, are revealed.

> *"I remember one day when I was staying at Jeppe's town, when I knock off, I used to walk there in the street. I met some school children, those school children [laughs] they shouted to me; security, security, security, machinjingilane [derogatory Zulu name for security guard]. Each and everyone was paying attention to me. I was not angry because they were children, but I was humiliated. During that time, there were people*

passing in a taxi, they were looking at me, all of them. Even the taxi driver laughed at me. [The children] know the uniform [children]" (Charles, 15/09/11)

Socially, the security guard's uniform identity announces him as a one-dimensional man/woman, with only the status he wears on his sleeve (Joseph and Alex, 1972:725). The uniform of the security guard seems to signify general stereotypes such as the idea that they are not learned and are functionally illiterate, that they are failures who are useless, poor and without the ability to reason. Security guards are aware of these stereotypes and they form a key part of the reason why many in actual fact despise the job. For the public, the uniform means the fact that:

"Security [guards] are not knowledgeable, they have not learnt, and they did not go to school" (Mandla, 25/10/11)

"They think security doesn't know how to read and write they take us to be useless" (Prince, 10/12/11)

Some declared that they feel proud wearing the uniform because at least they have a job, but it is the insults that turn this into a de-humanising experience. Public perceptions have psychological implications for the security guard who feels unimportant, unappreciated and disrespected. Some, but not all, take extra clothes to work, in order to wear them instead of the uniform when going into public places after work. With his/her uniform on, the wearer cannot keep his/her status anonymous. He/she becomes closely identified with the status signified by the uniform and only with this status. Often he removes his uniform to escape his identification as a member of the group (Joseph and Alex, 1972:726). Many security guards in my study rejected the uniform as a way of re-affirming their individuality. This is all done as an attempt to

avoid the cocktail of demeaning stereotypes that comes with the uniform. Assuming an individualistic and non-uniformed status provides an escape route away from the stereotypes (Joseph and Alex, 1972:726).

> *"[I change and wear my own clothes] because most people won't know that I am a security, but if I am wearing a uniform, each and everyone may see that this guy is a security guard and is not learned. It draws everyone's attention. I'd rather wear my own clothes. I think that way many people will not know that I am a security guard"* (Mandla, 17/09/11)

By taking off their uniform to conceal their identity, security guards actively reject the uniform status itself as a way of gaining better relations with the general public (Joseph and Alex, 1972:728).

With time, some security guards reach a point where they simply try to ignore public stereotypes and wear their uniforms. This however, is done through reference to external forms of symbolic significations.

> *"The uniform is a big problem, but when we go to the bank, we stand in one line. The money is not written security guard"* (Mohale, 25/10/11)

Security guards I interviewed are employees and some use the fact that they are employed as a source of meaning, enabling them to wear their uniform with some ease.

> *"The uniform is a problem because people don't respect you, I wear my uniform, the insults hurt but I have to work"* (Lenzo, 10/11/11)

These demeaning stereotypes seem to make them angry, but security guards often tolerate demeaning utterances by the public and attempt to remain patient and calm. In this instance, the uniform not only acts as a symbol of shame but also as a reminder to the security guard that his individuality must be submerged and the values of professionalism of his organisation upheld. It acts as a form of control, setting boundaries, which the man/woman behind must not cross (Joseph and Alex, 1972).

> *"Sometimes I feel like they are provoking me [the public], but as a security officer, I know that I have to be patient. It makes me very angry; sometimes I can't go in the streets with the uniform. I think if the people who come here [to his workplace] say that I am not learned, what about those outside? What are they thinking? They are thinking the same thing"* (Mandla, 17/09/11)

I asked Mandla how he knows people regard security guards in this way, he spoke of a specific incident where a visitor at his workplace insulted him for not granting him access because he did not have any form of identification with him such as an ID or drivers' license.

> *"Sometimes some other people, they just undermine us. Somebody said to me that you are not learned, you are just useless. You think maybe you will succeed in life, there is nothing which you are going to do"* (Mandla, 17/09/11)

Security guards are required to enforce safety rules and regulations of the particular institution at which they are posted by their employers. Some officers declared that some of the rules and regulations do not really make sense but they are employed to implement them. Often the public treats security guards as if he/she was the one who established those safety rules and regulations that tend to make little sense to the public.

"I work at Park Station, so people undermine a security. Where I work, the rules make it seem like I'm fighting with people" (Tshivashe, 25/10/11)

The wearer of the uniform is expected to confirm to the social attributes attached to his sleeve. He/she is expected to conform and live up to the stereotypes. A security guard that is knowledgeable and learned would be seen as incompatible with the norms and values attributed to his uniform and he/she will therefore be regarded as un-usual. The public, upon identifying the uniform expects from the wearer, the fulfilment of his social position and expectations in interaction (Joseph and Alex, 1972:726).

The crisis of recognition

"Even if we catch him, they say it is Campus Control" (Fortune, 25/10/11)

According to Sayer (2005:1) recognition is fundamentally a class issue. He believes the poor are not 'disadvantaged mainly because they fail to value their identity and misrecognise and undervalue their cultural goods, or because they are stigmatised through all these things which make their situation worse; rather they are disadvantaged mainly because they lack the means to live in ways which they and others value'.

Several security guards in Johannesburg complained that they do not get the degree of recognition they feel is worthy of their work from the general public. This often came out when speaking about their relations to the police who are at times seen to get all the recognition even when they did nothing to deserve it. For Sayer (2005:1), 'people may feel class pride or shame and care a lot about how they are positioned with regards to class and how they are treated by others. They are more likely to be concerned about class with respect to recognition of their worth and want to be respected or respectable'. Recognition and valuation, Sayer (2005:1)

argues are somewhat conditional on what people do for living, public perceptions of them, how 'they behave and how they live'. 'Class concern' is partly about having access to the practices and ways of life that are valued by society. A number of security guards in Johannesburg felt that the lack of recognition stems from the kind of work they do as well as their working conditions and wage levels. They felt that they are not recognised because they are on the lower end of the social ladder. The existing social hierarchy between the police and the security guards seems to provoke feelings of envy and contempt.

> *"When something happens, we are the first to see it because we are always there. We are the ones that report it to the office [control room] and the police they just take the statement and don't mention us. Now it is them who arrested the person and not us. They get the promotion and we get nothing. We are treated like baby police"* (Richard, 20/08/11)

Commenting on the controversial 2006 national security strike, which was marked by violence (part of which was due to conflict between security guards and the police), a SATAWU office bearer spoke of existing tensions and contestation between security guards and the police.

> *"[There is] conflict with the police and security because there is this contestation in terms of the role of security and the police. Most of the time that contestation comes to practice where they would normally want to test each other. It is one of those dynamics in the security industry"* (Jackson, 18/08/11)

These tensions seem not only to exist between the police and the security guards, but also between different sections within the security industry itself. These tensions were evident in the

ways in which the outsourced security guards on campus complained about the appropriation of recognition by the in-house Campus Control for work done by them.

> *"Me and my colleague we catch that guy [the suspect], Campus Control change the statement they said they catch him. I don't understand. Even us, we ask ourselves. We call our manager, we ask what is happening because every time we do our job, it gets changed [the statement]. Some of them [Campus Control] come and sleep here in the TV room, but when we catch the thief, they change the statement"* (Fortune, 25/10/11)

Part of the contestation is located around the politics of space and belonging. The security guards who are outsourced feel that they are not recognised and are treated in this manner mainly because they are on contract and are not employees of Wits University.

> *"We came here with a contract, they are permanent [Campus Control] but they take us like we are useless, because we are on contract. Anytime our contract can be finished. That is why they take advantages. They are promoting themselves [by claiming to arrest when they did not]. That is the problem. They think because they earn more, they are better. They think they own this place because they are permanent, but they don't even know who built this building"* (Fortune, 25/10/11)

Taylor (1992, cited in Sayer, 2005:10) distinguishes between two types of recognition: unconditional and conditional. The former refers to social processes involved in recognising other people by 'virtue of their humanity, equal worth, equal neediness and their standing as citizens'. The latter refers to a more discriminative form of recognition, which takes into account 'behaviour, character, class, social status and achievements'. Conditional recognition

Taylor (1992, cited in Sayer, 2005:10) may be reflected in expressions of approval, or status, envy or prestige, or in terms of payments of money.

Security guards feel discriminated against by the public partly because of their social status. The recognition awarded to them is conditional and thus discriminative in so far as it places particular significance to certain elements, which guards in practice might lack.

The next section combines both quantitative and qualitative findings. Organised under the nine themes of decent work of the ILO, I use the findings of the 2011 Gauteng security sector DWS to provide a descriptive overview of the working conditions of security guards. The survey cut-cross several layers of security guards, including the self-employed and in-house. I only consider outsourced (registered/unregistered) because they fall within the scope of this study. Simultaneously, I discuss the qualitative findings to elucidate the day-to-day lived subjective experiences of security guards in Johannesburg. However, I go beyond the nine themes, which primarily focus on the workplace, and also look at the household as a continuum of the production process.

Nine themes of decent work

Table 15 sums the scores on each of the nine themes of decent work. These ratings were generated based on how each of the nine themes was calculated, using items covered in the questionnaire. It presents the mean average of each of the nine themes for outsourced security guards in Gauteng.

Table 15: Scores of the nine themes of decent work

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Employment opportunities	778	0.54	0.33	0	1
Stability & security at work	742	0.65	0.25	0.17	1
Earnings	769	0.69	0.24	0	1
Hours	771	0.31	0.22	0	1
Work, family & personal life	779	0.34	0.47	0	1
Equal opportunity & treatment	771	0.61	0.34	0	1
Safety	769	0.74	0.21	0	1
Social protection	783	0.48	0.27	0	1
Social dialogue	783	0.14	0.30	0	1
Overall average		0.50			

(Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:6).

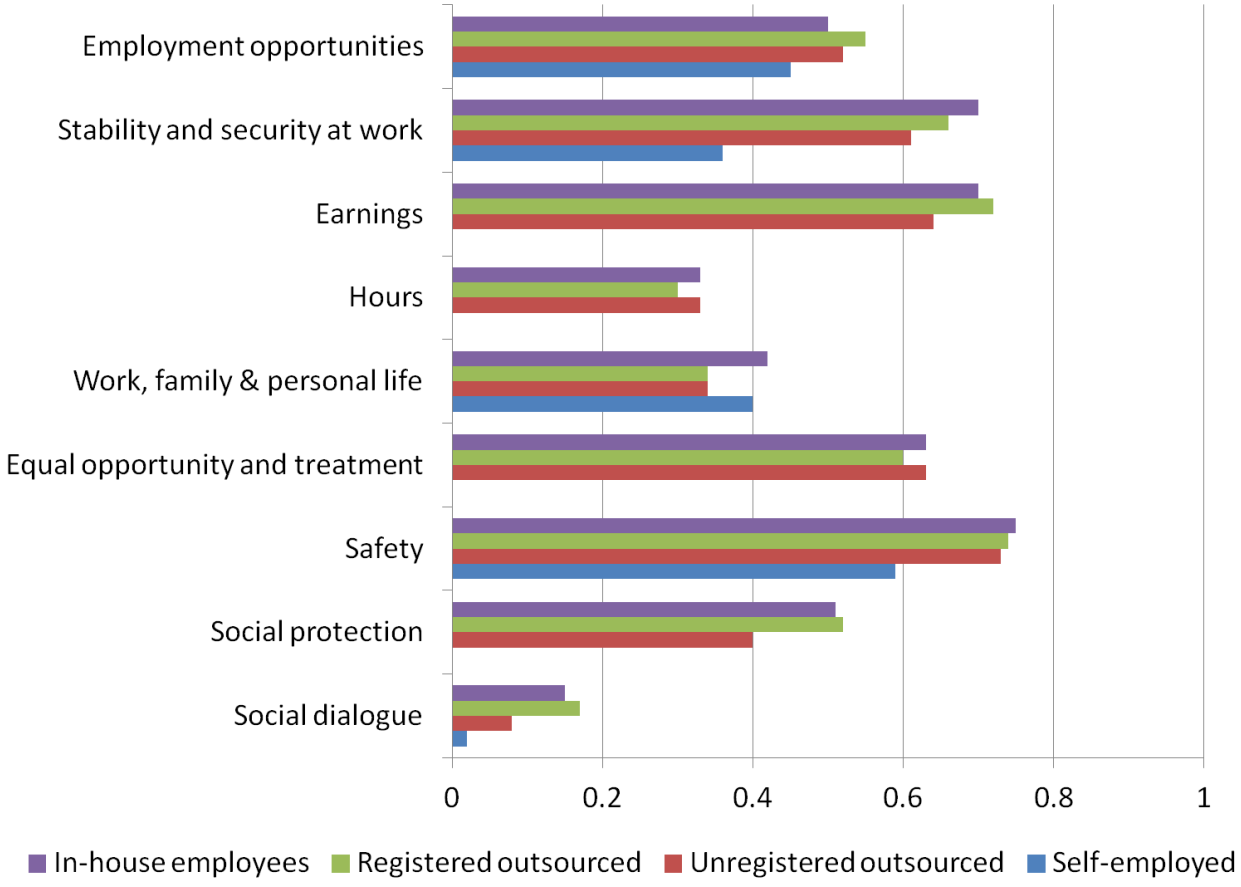


Chart 3 (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:6)

Theme 1: Employment opportunities

This theme measures the ease of finding employment in the PSI. In order to measure this, the survey questionnaire had three items rescaled to run from 0 to 1. Security guards were divided between those who agreed or disagreed with the statement that "it was difficult to get a job as a security guard in Gauteng" (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b). The three items are:

- Disagree or disagree strongly with: It is difficult to get a job as a security guard in Gauteng (q48a)
- Agree or agree strongly with: It is easier to get a job as a security guard than to get a job in construction (q48b)
- Agree or agree strongly with: It is easier to get a job as a security guard than to start your own business (q48c).

Registered outsourced and unregistered outsourced security guards felt that it was relatively easy to get a job in the PSI in Gauteng. The former obtained a score of 0.54, while the latter obtained a score of 0.52. A large section of the security guards interviewed in the survey tended to agree with the statement that "it is easier to get a job as a security guard than a job in construction in Gauteng" (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011b). The in-depth interviews reveal the same type of feelings among participants regarding the employment opportunities offered by the PSI.

"These nowadays there is no more jobs, it is only security" (Khensani, 25/10/11)

The PSI is the fastest growing occupation in Gauteng. The security sector is the biggest employer of entry-level candidates into the work force in South Africa (Conradie, 2011, cited in Masote, 2011:1). For many, it is the first port of entry into the labour market. A large section of the security guards I interviewed in Johannesburg felt that it was relatively easier to get a job in the PSI when they embarked on an active job hunt. Many people from different parts of the country, particularly from rural areas migrate to Johannesburg, looking for work; they easily find employment in the PSI.

> *"I am from KZN. I came here to Johannesburg looking for work. I thought maybe I can find one in a factory but I didn't find it … My cousin told me, and said security is the only industry which you can find a job. Just give it a try. I went to training for two weeks and I got a job fast"* (Mandla, 17/09/11)

However, others do not become security guards immediately upon arrival in Johannesburg. Instead, they also enter the labour market through other industries such as hospitality. Nevertheless, they quickly get absorbed into the PSI once training certificates are obtained and an active job hunt engaged. One participant commented:

> *"I came here with my cousin to look for work. I found it at a restaurant where I worked as a scullery. I got a promotion to be a chef, I worked until 2009. I went for security training and I found a job"* (Charles, 15/09/11)

The decision to move into the PSI seems to be motivated by the relative stability in income offered by the industry. Unlike working for unpredictable income based on tips, a basic salary in the PSI creates the possibility for greater budgetary and financial planning.

"I was a waiter. The problem with that is that you cannot really budget. At least here I am able to plan and save some money. I was working at the News café in Meyersdale near Alberton. There is no basic salary, you actually rely on tips. [The restaurant pays] R3 per hour. If you work from seven to four it is still little. From that they take R5 everyday for breakage. You pay it even if you don't break anything" (Sipho, 07/08/11)

Others enter the labour market through construction work, but eventually shift to the PSI partly because of the ease of entry but also because of other factors like the relatively greater sense of stability and greater employment duration the industry offers compared to construction.

"When you finish painting, the job is finished. How long does it take to paint?" (William, 25/10/11)

When others get retrenched from factories that close down, they seek and find employment in the PSI:

"I was working in the factory, I got retrenched, I had a security training certificate, I registered everything with PSIRA. These nowadays there is no more jobs, it is only security" (Khensani, 25/10/11)

However, being a security guard does not seem to be the employment of choice for any of the participants I interviewed. Many see the job as a stepping-stone to other forms of employment. While is it easy to find a job in the industry, the job itself comes with its own bundle of experiences that many found appalling and demeaning, like the boredom, the stigma of the uniform and so forth. The job is chosen out of necessity, driven by the need to earn a living and the relative lack of employment opportunities in other industries.

"I am a security guard not by choice, I have other qualifications but there are no jobs out there. So it is easy to find a security job. But it is strenuous. No one respects you. I don't know anyone who wants to be a security guard. We just do it because we have families to support. It is very easy to get the security job, you just go to training. Sometimes you can even buy the certificate for R300, you register at PSIRA and you start to work" (William, 25/10/11)

The PSI is characterised by a high turnover of labour. It is easy to get a job in the industry, but it is also easy to exit.

"No, there are too many companies; fly-by-nights are a lot, so it is easy to get a job. But it is also easy to be replaced. They have spares" (Mohale, 25/10//11)

The industry offers very little stability and security of employment.

Theme 2: Stability and security at work

This theme is concerned with security and stability of work and measures whether employees have contracts, what those contracts say and whether employees have job security. To measure this, the survey questionnaire had three items rescaled to run from 0 to 1:

- Yes written (score 1) and Yes verbal (score 0.5) to: Do you have a contract of employment? (q18)
- Permanent/indefinite to: What type of contract do you have? (q19)
- Disagree or disagree strongly with: I fear that I will lose this job in the next twelve months (q48d).

The survey investigated whether security guards had contracts of employment and also the nature of those contracts. The registered outsourced security guards and unregistered outsourced security guards scored relatively high on stability and security of employment. The former scored 0.66 and the latter scored 0.61 (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a). This tends to suggest that security guards have a high degree of stability and security at work. However, the qualitative data shows a different picture, with outsourced security guards displaying strong levels of job insecurity. All the participants I interviewed claimed they had signed written contracts. But the in-depth interviews not only indicate that employers ignore these contracts but that they deepen our understanding and illustrate how employers tend to ignore these contracts.

Despite having contracts, security guards remain highly insecure about stability and security at work. Employment stability and security seems to be a great concern for most security guards I interviewed. The nature of employment in the PSI is contractual (Buti, 2010:24). When asked what their contracts say, security guards often said that their contracts are permanent. However, they also acknowledge that this 'permanent' form of employment does not necessarily hold true in reality. Some companies employ workers on contracts, which are renewed on a monthly basis and some at every six-month interval. There is no guarantee that the contract will be renewed next month or even on the upcoming sixth month. The contractual nature of employment in the PSI leads workers to experience intensified feelings of insecurity, uncertainty and instability. When asked how he felt about the terms of employment, one guard stated:

> *"I feel very sad because anytime they can say take your bags and go. There is nothing I can do"* (Jonathan, 10/12/11)

Another declared:

> *"I don't have any guarantee of my job; I have no peace of mind"* (Mandla, 17/09/11)

The perpetual possibility that one may wake up unemployed tomorrow is a daily, lived experience for many security guards. It is an experience that takes away peace of mind. Stability is a very important aspect of the decent work agenda, but on a subjective level the PSI seems to have a offer relatively little in this regard.

Theme 3: Wages

This theme measures earning levels and whether they are able to satisfactorily meet the workers and his families basic needs in that specific context. Remunerative work is a key dimension of decent work. This theme was covered by four items in the survey questionnaire, rescaled to run from 0 to 1:

- Monthly earnings of R2 200 or above (q22 and q23 to get month earn)
- A little or stay the same to: How much do your earnings change from week to week/month to month? (q26)
- Yes to: Have you received a wage increase in the past 12 months? (q20) (Not asked of self-employed)
- In last 12 months or in last 5 years to: When did you last attend work-related training? (q27).

Outsourced security guards, both registered and unregistered obtained relatively high scores on earnings. Registered outsourced scored 0.72, while unregistered outsourced scored

0.64. The mean monthly take home for the former was R2 748 and R2 583 for the latter (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:17).

Most companies in my sample pay security guards according to the minimum wages set out in SD6 of 2001. However there were also non-compliant companies that pay wages far below the minimum requirements. Some guards declared that they earn R1 800. SD6, sets out remuneration standards according area (Johannesburg falls under area one) and grades ranging from A to D. Most guards are on grade D and C whose basic income is R2 519 and R2 691 respectively for area one. From the payslips of various security guards I interviewed, the take home including overtime was around R3 500 per month (see Appendix 3).

While this decent work theme measures wage levels, it does not measure the expenditure incurred by workers in their daily activities, particularly the activities of social reproduction. Despite the general feeling on the ground of inadequate wages, which are barely sufficient to meet basic needs, security guards felt that their wages were better than nothing.

Some security guards declared that they often get drunk as a way of forgetting some of their unpleasant work and life experiences. However, on the whole, the inability of the wage to meet basic needs did not seem to be a result of financial mismanagement and so forth. Instead, it seems that it is more a result of the rising cost of social reproduction (Luxton and Bezanson, 2006:3). The high cost of social reproduction erodes the wage, making it to seem pitiful and inadequate, intensifying in the process the struggle to make ends meet. Wage levels have a direct bearing on the quality of life individuals and families live (Luxton and Bezanson, 2006). The wage levels are below the COSATU proposed living wage (Rees, 2011:26–33), but some guards feel the low wage is better than not having any job,

"It is bad [the wage] but it is better than sitting at home and bothering other people with money" (Richard, 20/08/11)

The contrast between the level of income and rising cost of reproduction is illustrated by this comment:

"[R3 000] is not money because things are very expensive, so you must sacrifice to do everything. R3000 is not money. Bread is R 10, fish is R14, and how much do you spend a week? Some people they pay that for medical aid, myself I call it is my salary" (Khensani, 25/10/11)

Registered security guards who earn the minimum wages set in the industry also complained that the wages are incompatible with the general costs of living. In a similar vein, another security guard explained how he attempts to make do with what he has.

"If I can just have some eggs, tomato, onion, canned fish and potato I am fine. My main worry is to send money home to my children so that they can eat. I don't want my children to struggle. If I can just have R300 for food, I am fine. The rest I can send home to my children" (Tshivase, 15/12/11)

The declared rental amounts paid in places such as Yeoville range between R800 and R1 500, others hire shacks (R350) and backrooms in surrounding townships but transport costs, combined with other expenses make for precarious livelihoods. Often, they leave their families at home in the rural areas and remit money for basic necessities. Security guards have life strategies that they exercise as a response to their material deprivation emanating from their relatively low wages and the rising cost of living.

Registered and unregistered private security guards, both South African and foreign, occupy a deserted building situated next to the highway just outside Newtown Johannesburg. The building was a college, Bingele College, which had since closed down. The building was without water and electricity before illegal connections were made. The property is run-down, rat-infested characterised by the 'detached' (Standing, 2011: 8) who live near the entrance under the bridge. Some doors do not lock and there are virtually no windows. They had not been replaced since they were broken. The security guard from Venda whom I interviewed declared that his security company organised the "free accommodation". He lives alone because his wife is in the village. Coming back from work, he cooks, cleans and does his laundry. However, he made clear that he does not like staying in such a dirty place, but only does so because it allows him to save some money to send home to his family.

I interviewed Rutendo (17/11/11) an unregistered security guard, working at Park Station. He was told by a supervisor that he is employed on Grade D:

> *"They say I get paid on Grade D, but there is nothing like that. There is no basic amount here in the company, you just work and you will only see how much you earn at month end"* (Rutendo, 17/11/11)

During some weeks, Rutendo works seven days a week without a day off and no payment for overtime. Sometimes his monthly salary is R1 800. Payday is not known and tends to rotate between the 17th and 30th of the month. From his R1 800, R100 gets deducted for uniform. He has two children who live with his mother in Venda. He sends some money on some months when he can. With his income, Rutendo used to live in Hillbrow, renting a flat for R600 where he used to stay with his wife. He said:

"My wife used to stay with me, here in Johannesburg, but she went back home because I earn nothing. She saw I was struggling, so at least now is better. But I am still struggling (Rutendo, 17/11/11)

Low remuneration seems to be one of the main reasons why many see a security job as a stepping-stone. Some guards declare they want to join the SAPS, others want to be boilermakers, and others want to study further while some want to establish small businesses.

Having a job seems not to provide immunity from poverty. Some feel that the contrast between the expectations of work, i.e. enable one to meet basic needs and the actual reality is a vividly lived and disappointing experience. Some feel that being unemployed is perhaps better because they expect to live in poverty, but the expectation of work was that it was suppose to be a vehicle away from poverty but the reality seems to suggest otherwise.

"If you are suffering when you are unemployed, it is better because you tell yourself that I am unemployed and you know your situation, but now I do good morning every day and I am still living like this" (Peter, 27/10/11)

In the same vein, another guard, once pointed to his torn shoes and said:

"Just take a look; can you say I am working? You can't, I am just poor" (Charles, 15/09/11)

Theme 4: Hours

This theme measures the length of the working day, overtime and implications for the worker and his/her family.

Decent hours include night work, hours of work, weekly rest and paid leave. Excessive hours of work (per cent of employed, by status in employment), and time-related underemployment rate (per cent of employed population working less than hours threshold, but available and wanting to work additional hours) (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a). The survey questionnaire had three items, rescaled from 0 to 1 in order to measure this theme:

- Non-overtime hours of 45 or below (q32)
- Overtime hours of 10 or below (q33) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Yes to: Can you refuse to work overtime? (q36) (Not asked of self-employed).

According to the sectoral determination, security guards commonly work 12-hour shifts. In a week, security guards often work 48 hours excluding overtime. Security guards may not work more than ten hours overtime in any week. Both registered and unregistered security guards scored very low on hours, obtaining scores of 0.30 and 0.31 respectively. This suggests that there is a very high decent work deficit in terms of working hours in the security industry (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a).

Many guards felt that they worked extremely long hours and that this has some implications for their general wellbeing. Several guards declared that standing for 12 hours is a very painful experience. Security guards complained about swollen feet, painful joints and aching spinal cords because of standing for long hours.

"Standing is difficult. I don't think you can stand for 3 hours. I stand for 12 hours"

*(*Mohale, 25/10/11*)*

Another security guard added:

"As a security [guard] you are working like a soldier, to stand like this the whole day is not to play, the back, the legs ... eish" (Khensani, 25/10/11)

Walking around during a shift, stretching now and then offers some temporary relief from tension and discomfort caused by standing for long hours. The nature of the job itself seems to bring the body under a lot of strain. Others reported that every night, they use warm water to press on those areas that they may experience some discomfort and pain.

Working long hours not only seems to have negative effects on the body, but also has implications for the work and family balance. Working long hours, under strenuous conditions means that security guards are often caught between resting in order to be productive and not falling asleep on duty the next day, and fulfilling social responsibilities such as parenting and spending time with one's spouse. Long hours affect the amount of time dedicated to child-care and other aspects of social life. While balancing work and family life is difficult for some people working non-shift work, the balance seems far more delicate for shift workers like security guards due to the amount of hours they work. For shift workers in general, long hours mean that they often experience stress because of the amount of time they have to meet their own personal social activities and others' expectations of them (Hall, 1999:1; Pronk, 2005:34).

Theme 5: Work and family balance

This theme measured whether security guards felt they had enough time to spend with their families and time for personal life given the fact that they work long hours.

The survey questionnaire had only one item, rescaled from 0 to 1 in order o measure this theme:

- Agree or agree strongly with: I get enough time to spend with my family (q48g).

The majority of respondents did not think they had enough time to spend with their family. Both registered and unregistered security guards obtained the same score of 0.34 (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a: 17).

Over the last decade, the issue of work-life balance has received significant attention in international and national policy agendas (ILO, 2011:1). The term is a subjective notion and is concerned with "the distribution of time and effort between work and other aspects of life" (ILO, 2011:1). It is concerned with "achieving satisfying experiences in all life domains, and to do so requires personal resources such as energy, time and commitment to be well distributed across domains" (Kirchmeyer, 2000:81, cited in Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003:512). The work-life balance is concerned with the workers' ability to approximate 'equal levels of attention, time, involvement and commitment' between the two spheres (Kirchmeyer, 2000:81, cited in Greenhaus, Collins and Shaw, 2003:512).

Security guards often felt that they had a work-life imbalance, they often experienced stress, frustration and anxiety about the relatively little time they have to spend with their families because of work commitments. Security guards often have to leave home early to arrive on time at work to begin their day shifts, which begin at 6:00. Some declared that they have to arrive at their post at least 15 minutes before 6:00 in order to take over from the guard who was on night duty. Those who live in surrounding townships such as Soweto, Alexandra and Tembisa have to leave home very early to catch a taxi and make it to town on time. During these hours, their family members are usually asleep. When they return home in the evenings, they are often tired and need to sleep for a couple of hours, when they wake up, they eat, but their

children are already getting ready for bed. They also have to sleep early in preparation for the next shift. The difficulty in striking a work-life balance is no different when working at night. Some security guards hate their job because it does not allow them to spend enough time with their families.

> *"Its bad, its too bad because I can't even see my child when he is coming from school. Every time he comes from school I have to leave so that I can catch the train. I can see them in the morning but they have to prepare when I return, but I can't see my wife for long. Its tough, now I am here, I don't know what's happening there. If someone hurts them, I can't leave here. It's tough being a security. This job, I hate it because I can't even have time with my family"* (Fortune, 25/10/11)

The ILO uses the term work-life reconciliation in accordance with the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156). Family forms a large and very important part of personal life for many people. The term 'reconciliation' reflects the tension underpinning the relationship between work and family responsibilities (ILO, 2011:1). The long hours worked by security guards not only have a negative impact on their health, job quality, but also on their families (ILO, 2011:2). This suggests that the lives of security guards are marked with severe tensions between work obligations and family responsibilities. Many security guards declared that they only get to spend some time with their families during leave, and or during off-days. Declarations on how their work does not allow them enough time to spend with their families were often marked with emotion and anger. This was reflected in the emphasis placed on the already strong emotive word like "hate". The effects of a work-life imbalance are shown through emotion both by security guards themselves and their family members.

"Sometimes I really see that it affects because I know ladies need their man to be besides her. Last month, I was working at night so she used to cry so much and you could see that she misses someone. I can see in her eyes that she is worried. Even my little baby, sometimes when I leave home, sometimes she cries. Sometimes when I come back in the morning, she gives me a smile and you can see this person was missing someone. Sometimes it is very bad" (Sipho, 07/08/11)

Makgetla (2007:18) found that single mothers return home late at night in the evenings around 21:00. They still have to cook, clean and assist their children with homework. Her schedule meant that she did not often have enough time to spend with her family. The Gauteng DWS indicated that women spent more time on housework, and especially child-care, than men (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:18–9).

Security guards, both South Africans from rural areas and foreign nationals, are often away from their families for long periods of time. Some of them are unable to go home because employers are not willing to give them their leave days. Some security guards have not had leave for *"three years"* (Mandla, 17/09/11). Leaving for home during the festive season is not an option for many guards, employers argue that the festive season is considered a relatively more dangerous period, which needs the full capacity of security officials.

Foreign nationals are often worse off since they are unregistered and relatively more vulnerable. Many are forced to accept work under difficult conditions because they fear dismissal and ill-treatment by employers. Without any claims to rights, many cannot apply for leave and have the guarantee that when they return from their home countries the job will still be there.

Theme 6: Equal opportunity and treatment

This theme measures discrimination in its variant forms experienced by security guards in the workplace. The survey questionnaire had three items, rescaled from 0 to 1 in order to measure this theme:

- Agree or agree strongly with: My employer treats women and men equally (q48h) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Agree or agree strongly with: My employer treats South Africans and non-South Africans equally (q48i) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Agree or agree strongly with: My employer treats people of different races equally (q48j) (Not asked of self-employed) (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:20).

Security guards scored relatively high on this theme. Registered guards scored 0.60, while unregistered guards scored 0.63 (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:17). The majority of participants held the view that there is equal opportunity and treatment in the industry; 70% of security guards thought that men and women were treated equally. The men who disagreed felt that employers favoured women (better conditions of work and types of jobs); 60% felt that employers treated South Africans and non-South Africans equally (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:19). The in-depth interviews indicate that some unregistered outsourced Zimbabwean security guards do not agree that South Africans and non-South Africans are treated equally. Foreign nationals form 8% of security guards in Gauteng (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:17).

In this section, I look at the position of women and foreign immigrants in the PSI. These two categories highlight the forms of discrimination that emerged from my fieldwork. I begin with the women in the industry.

Women in the industry

A body of research exists that indicates how women are viewed within the security sector in general (including police, military and so forth). South Africa's democratic transition of 1994 has seen greater emphasis placed on promoting gender equality in the workplace in general. These efforts have led to some changes that allow women to enjoy the same conditions of employment alongside their male counterparts. However, women are still largely excluded from the specialised services. Hendricks and Hutton (2008) notes that it is only until quite recently that opportunities for women in specialised services, such as explosives units and elite task forces are made available. Despite significant progress in addressing the gender discrimination levelled against women in the labour market, discrimination against women continues (Hendricks and Hutton, 2008:28–9).

Men dominate the PSI. The Gauteng DWS found that 86% of security guards are male (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:4). Women in the industry are seen more as support staff rather than the core security guards. In this way women in the PSI occupy a somewhat subordinate position. Women are generally viewed by various supervisors and private security company office bearers as inherently unsuited for the industry. The often cited reason for this view is that, by its very nature, the job is risky and dangerous. These gender dynamics play a role in the distribution of security guards across categories in the industry. These three categories are: guarding, armed response and cash-in-transit. Employers argue that

risk involved generally varies across these categories with guarding being the least dangerous and armed response and cash-in-transit being most dangerous. "Cash-in-transit workers often make the headlines for the danger of their job" (Fourie, 2007:22, in Forrest, 2007:22). Women are virtually absent in cash-in-transit as this is viewed as most dangerous of the three categories in the security industry. Moreover, some companies prefer to place women on day-shifts, rather than night-shifts. But when they are placed on night-shift, they are placed indoors and often with other men. One supervisor said:

> *"We avoid putting women at night-shift. We put them on day-shift because the job is very dangerous for them"* (Robert, 26/10/11)

Commenting on women's involvement in armed-response, an office bearer of a security company in the top five highlighted some activities of the security industry and how the industry is unsuitable for women.

> *"When you respond, you need to jump over walls, you need to break in, [and] you need to be able to resist any bugler. So generally, the dangerous side of the job is not for ladies. We have 10 500 workers in armed response across the country and we have total of five women in armed response and none of them are in Gauteng"* (Cyril, 28/10/11)

Women are portrayed as having inborn incapacity to do certain tasks. They are viewed as unable to do certain security functions because of their physical and psychological makeup (Dalla Costa and James, 1972). These beliefs form part of the justification to exclude women from certain categories of employment in the PSI. Women in the industry are spread according to these perceptions of their capabilities and the risky nature of the job. They tend to be placed mostly in the guarding category, for example in malls to observe customers mostly in retail for

instances of shoplifting. Even so, they generally work under the supervision and/or authority of men. Their incapability in several respects whether it is jumping over walls or resisting a criminal makes it necessary that they be led by men (Dalla Costa and James, 1972). One women guard spoke of an instance where she caught a thief and had to call the men to assist her in handcuffing because thieves often resist violently and want to take advantage of the fact that a woman is guarding.

> *"I stand here and make sure that they don't steal in the shop. When I catch a thief, I call the men I work with to come and tie the thief and take him [or her] away"* (Maria, 03/11/11)

She added that:

> *"Men are stronger and have less fear when handling robbers. Even criminals, they take advantage that it is a woman security guard"* (Maria, 03/11/11)

Some economic implications flow from the concentration of women in guarding. Guarding is usually grades D and C, while cash-in-transit and armed response are grades B or A. The concentration of women in guarding and other better-paying more specialised categories that earn higher wages implies the material subordination of women as well. They are confined to the lower paying categories with very little prospect of moving up because of the existing cultural view on women in the industry.

Foreign nationals

Some private security companies have two types of employees: the registered and unregistered security guards. The registered layer of workers often consists of locals who have PSIRA cards and enjoy a degree of access to minimum standards of employment which the SD6 seeks to guarantee. The unregistered layer mainly consists of foreign nationals who carry the heavier burden of extreme exploitation – working on average under worse conditions. Many of them come to South Africa with the hope of finding a job and sending remittances back home. But the search for money is experienced as a very violent process marked by torture and shame. Some foreign nationals work double shifts (day and night shift consecutively), they have no representation, virtually no rights and no sense of belonging and are ill-treated by managers. The foreign nationals that I interviewed were from Zimbabwe. Tafadzwa, a 27-year-old man from Zimbabwe highlighted some of these violent processes he experienced in the PSI in Johannesburg. After going to Home Affairs in Pretoria to extend his days:

> *"They phoned me around 7pm, it was on a Thursday. They said come to duty. They wanted me to work double shift – to work Thursday night-shift and Friday day-shift. I didn't go. At around midnight they sent me an sms saying don't report on duty on Friday, you don't have the work. The next day I went to work. He said [supervisor] I don't have the work. So but he changes his mind and said he want to give me corporal punishment. He gave me two alternatives; either you lose your job or you are going to work in Honeydew. Your money is going to be cut with R900. I now get R2 700. He said to me, I can't refuse to work double-shift, so they cut my money with R900 and I also pay more for transport"* (Tafadzwa, 04/09/11)

Tafadzwa believed that he was being treated like this because he is not South African. I probed as to why he thought this was the case, he said:

"That is the fact that is there. The guys that are South African nationality, they don't work double shifts. For overtime, they use us foreigners. We spend over six months without getting payslip but some get it every month basis. When I ask for where my payslip is, they say they will look around in the office" (Tafadzwa, 04/09/11)

Processes of discrimination are at play and place the wrath of exploitation unequally on the shoulders of outsiders. Migration can be a process linked to prospective economic gains to be made in the country of destination (ACMS, 2010). But this migration is experienced in the security sector as one characterised by brutality, shame and disappointment:

"I come here hoping to find work and support my family back in Zimbabwe, but I have nothing. I am failing. It is tough. It is so bad" (Albert, 14/09/11)

Another immigrant from Zimbabwe, Tendekai lives in Berea in a room with his unemployed wife and young son. He was a soldier in Zimbabwe and came to South Africa in 1997. Since then Tendekai has worked in construction, hospitality (restaurants, waitering) and carpentry. It was only in 2005 that he decided to seek employment in the private security industry. He is an unregistered security guard. He declared that in his company, they sign one-month contracts, they don't get payslips, no leave and have no set date of payment:

"You are supposed to get your money on the 19th, others they don't get the money. Sometimes the money is short, so it is just another story. I am not happy at all" (Tendekai, 26/10/11)

The problem of not knowing his payday affects his financial planning:

"People they have got budget, we don't have a payday, how do you even budget? Sometimes it is on the 7th, 15th, 17th, 19th, you never know" (Tendekai, 26/10/11)

He declared that at times they only get paid for 14 days instead of the whole month, which he worked. This problem at work affects his family and has even led to the landlord evicting him and his family. He showed me an sms from the landlord:

"u are the one who came here looking for a place to stay. and u told me you would be paid by the 8th. now I have to chase after u as if I am a brother. all is needed is yo rent moni. I will just look for other people if u do not pay at least by one [13:00pm]. I do not want to stress" (Tendekai, 09/10/11)

Tendekai did not get paid on time and was evicted, but quickly made arrangements to move into another room belonging to one of his homeboys. Tendekai works in Mellville and tries to save money by walking to work, which is approximately 3.83km. To arrive at work on time, he has to leave home in the early hours of the morning.

"I don't use transport, I walk for an hour from Berea to Mellville at 4am because if I use transport the money is not going to balance" (Tendekai, 26/10/11)

Theme 7: Safety

This theme measured whether security guards had protective equipment such as protective clothing, a two-way radio and/or button sticks. The survey questionnaire had four items, rescaled from 0 to 1 in order o measure this theme:

- Agree or agree strongly with: I feel safe at work (q48f)

- No to: Have you been injured at work in the last 12 months? (q39)
- No to: Have you suffered a health problem from work that made you stay at home or consult a health worker in the last 12 months? (q40)
- Yes to: Have you been given any clothing or equipment to protect you/keep you safe? (q41).

73% of security guards in Gauteng said that they had some form of protective clothing. The majority declared that they felt safe at work (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a). According to the Sanlam Risk Survey, a widely acknowledged characteristic of security guard's work is its dangerous nature. The survey found that the 'work of security guards is amongst the most dangerous jobs in South Africa' (Sala, 2009, cited in Rees, 2011:8). In my study, security guards often had some equipment such as two- way radios, pepper spray, button sticks and panic buttons used to call armed response for backup. Guns are usually handled by armed response and cash-in-transit. Many security guards declared that the job is dangerous and that they do not always feel safe. They often felt that they were viewed by criminals as obstacles that needed to be eliminated. The phrase 'anything can happen' was often used to describe this feeling of vulnerability and continued exposure to danger. Exposure to danger varies across the three categories of guarding and also at the post where the security guard works. Those guarding at receptions in buildings whose main task are access control felt on average safer than those guarding in more remote isolated places and those in armed response. However, access control guards too are not exempted from unexpected life-threatening incidents. Tafadzwa, a young Zimbabwean guard describes a dangerous situation:

"The guys they came in and there was an ISUZU bakkie with keys inside. They got in and drove very fast to the boom gate where I was standing. When I tried to stop them

they just didn't care. I moved out of the way and they hit the boom gate and they went away" (Tafadzwa, 18/08/11)

On two occasions, I attempted to get phone numbers of a cash-in-transit guard to interview him in his free time, but he warned that I have to move away immediately. I was therefore unable to interview cash-in-transit guards. The fact that they perceived me as a threat is indicative of the dangerous nature of the job and therefore the need to stay clear of all forms of potential security threats.

The encounters I had with security designated to different categories showed how their levels of alertness differ. Those in guarding where often more relaxed, while those in armed response where more alert and responsive. I approached an armed response guard, in Parktown Johannesburg who was parked in a Toyota Yaris under a tree outside Wits Business School (WBS) having lunch, I introduced myself to him formally and there seemed to be no problem. However, when I extended my hand to greet him, he refused.

"No, I can't hold your hand. What if you know karate and you kick me and take my gun? No, no I can't. (Simon, 08/11/11)

Armed response guards who drive around in marked vehicles and guns feel they are targets of criminals who may want to take the car and gun to use for their own criminal activities. Roaming the streets of Johannesburg in the early hours of the morning interviewing armed response guards allowed me to gain some understanding of why they are scared.

"This job is very risky. Anything can happen. First I am carrying a firearm – I am a target [by criminals] because of the car" (Khutso, 26/06/11)

This armed response guard mentioned that he deliberately ignores certain panic buttons depending on where they are. Certainly some areas are deemed more dangerous than others, not only by the residences themselves but also the guard who are meant to provide some security.

The other reason for ignoring some panic buttons is unrelated to safety, but the fact that some alarms from residential areas are often false. The irony is that security guards are hired to protect people who perhaps feel unsafe in their homes and business spaces, but some are actually scared because of the risky nature of their work.

Theme 8: Social protection

This theme measures the extent of social security coverage for security guards. It takes into consideration compulsory schemes such as provident fund, Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF), medical aid etc. The questionnaire had a checklist of five benefits to which workers are entitled:

- Medical aid/scheme (q43b) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Pension fund (q43c) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Paid annual leave (q43e) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Paid sick leave (q43f) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Employer deducts money from wages for the Unemployment Insurance Fund (q44) (Not asked of self-employed).

One of the recent achievements in the industry is the establishment of a sectoral provident fund: 36% of formal employees were members of the provident fund; 82% of employees reported that their employers made UIF deductions from their wages; 42% of guards were not given paid-

leave when their partner gave birth (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a).

Table 16: Benefits received by employees

Type of benefit	**Registered outsourced %**	**Unregistered outsourced %**
Paid annual leave	67	54
Paid sick leave	61	48
Annual bonus	55	39
Provident fund	37	24
Funeral benefits	23	15
Medical aid scheme	5	3
Transport allowance	4	7
Housing Subsidy	0	1

(Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:22)

The security industry has inadequate social protection with less than half of security guards who have paid sick leave, annual bonus, provident fund, funeral benefits, medical aid scheme, transport allowance and housing subsidy. Registered security guards obtained a score of 0.52, while unregistered security guards scored 0.40 (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a:22).

The national provident fund has been extended to cover security guards in the private security industry. This is a major breakthrough in the industry, as it will ensure that for the first time workers in the industry are provided for when they retire (Zikalala, 2002:1-2). The provident fund for private security workers will provide some protection should a worker die or become disabled. In the event of death, the surviving family will be guaranteed some social protection (Zikalala, 2002). Belonging and contributing to the provident is compulsory for both employers and employees in the private security industry (Zikalala, 2002:1–2). In terms of the fund, workers will contribute 7.5% and employers will make the matching contribution to the fund (Theron, Kimani Ndungu, Godfrey, Rakgosi and Visser, 2008:134).

However, my research found that many companies whose employees are registered with PSIRA are not registered with the fund. Some of them have been employed for over four years in the same company and their payslips reflect pension contribution of R0 (see appendix 3). Only six or 25% of my participants had provident fund, while 18 or 75% had UIF.

The payslips I saw usually reflected contributions to PSIRA, which is R7 and UIF, which was R27.85. Some companies however do contribute to the employees' provident fund, the amount reflecting on the payslip of one security guard was R143. On the other hand, unregistered guards have none of these compulsory social protection measures.

The main problem appears to be non-compliance with the minimum conditions of employment. From interviews with employers, the general feeling was that making contributions to workers' benefits makes business less profitable and defeats the key purpose of being in business. Some employers hold the view that workers must devise their own strategies of saving money, as saving money for employees is not a core activity of their business. When asked if his company contributes to workers' provident funds, one employer replied cynically:

"Why must I benefit you? You must benefit yourself" (Benjamin, 05/11/11)

This presents major problems for the workers. One security guard who is also a SATAWU shop steward I interviewed explains why employers are not contributing to the social protection of workers.

"The main problem in the industry are the employer, they just want to open companies. He doesn't want to pay workers, he just wants income-this is where the main problem is. They just want fast money. The government is also encouraging this. They want this Black Empowerment, when it comes to security industry, I don't know about other

industries it's only guaranteed for a limited period. When you give a person a contract of five years, they know that they have to make the most of it. In that five years, it is the workers who suffer the most. They don't like unions and they are not happy when you join the union because they know union will put them under pressure" (Caven, 15/09/11)

The findings show that some workers respond to the employers' unwillingness to contribute by exploring societal networks and insurances packages as their own form of social protection. In spite of their low wages, security guards seemed to place a great deal of value on saving. This is linked to their recognition of the dangerous nature of the job and the need to leave something behind for their families should they die.

"I had to join a burial society, because anything can happen, so I pay R40 every month. We meet in the Glen [Soweto]. Even if maybe the finances for a month are really bad, I have to make a plan to pay that one" (Caven, 15/09/11)

18 or 75% had some form of social protection. Commonly, these social protection schemes where located in the rural areas where they came from. These include stokvels, burial societies, *moholisano and Thusanang* (Sotho word for helping one another*)*, which are grouping that save money during the year and use it to buy groceries usually at the end of the year). Some of the guards declared that they also have investment accounts and funeral plans with banks such as ABSA, FNB and NEDBANK.

"I have two at home, one is for casket [coffin, R90] and another for groceries. Here I have an investment account, I pay R150. It is at Nedbank" (Mohale, 26/10/11)

Another guard who joined a *Thusanang* community grouping tells of the sacrifices he had made during the year and how his family is going to benefit in the end from the shared money going towards groceries:

> *"That one it can help you, you can suffer from January, but now in December we share lot of money, even if you know you are suffering the whole year you know that at the end of the year, your kids are going to eat a rice, pumpkin, nice bread and Rama"* (Khensani, 25/10/11)

Other guards are also exploring more traditional ways of saving money. One guard spoke of how breeding cattle will be helpful when he retires and returns back to the rural areas:

> *"I am busy trying to buy at least one or two cows a year. I think if I can have cows, they can help me after 10 or 15 years later. They can be a lot and help me in my pension [retirement]"* (Prince, 10/12/11)

Conditions of work in the PSI are not dependent on whether a PSC is registered (operating legally) with PSIRA or unregistered (operating illegally as a fly by night), or whether the worker is registered or not. While registration is important because it seek to ensure compliance with minimum standards set out in the sectoral determination 6 of 2001, it by no means guarantees it. Rather, working conditions are more dependent on whether employers are compliant or non-compliant-and this depends to a large extent on the strength of the union in the company.

Theme 9: Social dialogue

The social dialogue indicator measures the degree or extent of voice/representation that security guards have in the workplace. This includes union density rate and the number of workers at enterprise belonging to employer organisations. The survey questionnaire had two items, rescaled from 0 to 1 in order o measure this theme:

- Yes to: Are you a member of a trade union? (q45) (Not asked of self-employed)
- Yes to: Are you a member of any other organisation/s that protects your interests at work? (q46) (Not asked of self-employed).

Unionisation levels in the security industry remain very low. Only 16% of respondents belonged to a trade union. This figure is similar to the figure of 18% unionisation found nation-wide by NALEDI. Only 10% belonged to any other organisation protecting workers' interests. Trade union density is low (16%) with SATAWU as the largest union (39% of those organised). Some security guards seem disillusioned with the trade union and have turned to legal firms. Scorpion and LegalWise obtained 22% and 16% respectively (Webster, Sefalafala, Budlender, Joynt, Williams and Orkin, 2011a).

Marx perceived unions as a natural consequence of the development of capitalist industry and saw them as important worker institutions (Hyman, 1971). Trade unions are the principal institution of workers in modern capitalist societies and aim to represent the interests of their members. Unions are an attempt by workers to associate among themselves. The evolution of industrial capitalism establishes the conditions of collective organisation and creates the conditions of deprivation that encourage them to combine (Hyman, 1971:7).

Unions provide workers with what Hirschman has termed "voice" (Richard and Medoff, 1980:2). Voice refers to the process of direct communication designed to bring actual and desired conditions closer together. Voice essentially means talking about problems. This

approach seeks to optimise the working relation between the employee and employer and this may entail discussing with employers conditions that need to be changed. Trade unions are the vehicle for collective voice providing workers as a group with a means of communicating with management as a collective rather than as an individual. Bargaining with employers is for effective voice at the workplace. Several aspects of an industrial setting are public goods and tend to affect a group as opposed to an individual. Even though such instances may prevail. Many aspects of industrial setting affect the wellbeing (negatively or otherwise) of every employee, reducing the incentive for any single person to express his preference and invest time and money in changing conditions for all affected (Richard and Medoff, 1980:3–5).

In the PSI, a number of workers face many work-related challenges in the form of employers' violation of basic conditions of employment. Some workers have virtually no rights in the workplace, working double shifts, not getting the whole month's salary for work done, no provident fund and having no annual leave and bonuses. Workplace public goods call for collective decision-making. Individual protest by workers is dangerous for the worker as this may lead to dismal through victimising the individual activist. Unions as voice institutions alter the workplace social relations by providing workers with a source of power, diluting managerial authority and offering members a measure of due process (Freeman and Medoff, 1979). Marxist theory on labour strongly suggests that capital fundamentally aims to emasculate labour through efforts that will undermine workers' unity, bargaining power and organisational strength (Bowles, 1985 cited in Freeman and Medoff, 1979). Security guards often lack 'voice' mainly because employers oppose these forms of association. Security guards are often denied the hard fought democratic right to belong to their association of choice.

Most of the security guards I have interviewed are unionised and all are members of SATAWU, the biggest union in the security industry. According to one of the participants, employers distinguish between 'comrades' and 'guards'. Guards are those non-union workers who are seen as obedient and willing to work. The 'comrades' are those that belong to unions, they are often seen as troublemakers who pose a potential disruption to the normal functioning of the security company. They are therefore the undesirable workers, the troublemakers who ought to be gotten rid of. Comrades are the main targets, the first ones employers want to fire.

> *"No, my company does not allow us to join a union. As I can tell you the supervisor came and said there are some comrades, those comrades are supposed to go to night-shift. They say we want to work with security guards, not comrades. They take them to night-shift so that they can catch them falling asleep and they chase them away. Obviously, sleeping on duty is a serious offence and there is nothing you can claim. I even think it is better for me to get a lawyer"* (Mandla, 07/08/11)

Getting a lawyer, according to him would be better because the company will not know about it, they will just be shocked when they infringe on his rights and they get letters from a lawyer. 33.33% of my interviewees belonged to union, while 8.33% belonged to other organisations that represent worker interests.

The significant scores by other organisations such as Scorpions and LegalWise indicate that there is growing disillusionment with unions. A similar trend was shown by Sefalafala (2011), in his research in Carletonville where he demonstrated how disillusioned union members and workers in general opted for legal representation rather than unions in resolving workplace

disputes. Unions face severe challenges in preserving rights won through struggle in order that they may champion the interests of their members.

Challenges for organising in the sector

While the security industry is experiencing rapid growth, unions do not seem to be making significant inroads in terms of incorporating workers into the structures. This is evidence of the fact that levels of unionisation remain significantly low. Low levels of unionisation have some important implications, such as the inability to establish a bargaining council, which requires employees and employers to represent 50% of the industry. The absence of a bargaining council is complemented by a bargaining forum with a constitution that bargains on conditions of employment in the security industry. However, without a bargaining council, the ability of the union to represents the interests of their members more coherently is minimised.

While it is the largest union in the PSI, SATAWU face some challenges in terms of organising security guards. The first challenge is that security guards are employed on a contract basis. The unions argue that the trend from fixed contracts towards outsourcing security makes it very difficult to organise. Union officials say that organising at state and 'parastatal institutions became more challenging when they shifted from in-house security to outsourced companies in the past decade' (Makgetla, 2007:13). The lack of stability and job security, which contracts tend to create, leads to major challenges for the union's organising efforts. The high turnover in

the industry means that unions are unable to build long-term relationships with workers. Unions across the world have been presented with a challenge bearing the potential of rendering them unresponsive and irrelevant (Webster and Von Holdt, 2010). Various unions in their respective trades have come up with a host of manifestos emerging from congress resolutions charting the way forward on how to respond to the growing informalisation of work. This has become a key challenge since an increasing number of the global workforce is being "informalized from above" (Webster, 2006). Since the security sector is primarily based on contracts, SATAWU faces a crucial challenge on how to respond to the nature of employment in the industry.

> *"One of the major challenges is the contract issue because you have got short-term contracts between employers and clients, yearly contracts. This makes the union to organise one place and another every year. You organise these workers, come end of the year, a new company takes over, employing new people because job security does not apply in this industry. That is what creates a challenge for the union. Employers when they start a site, they don't want workers that where belonging to a union because they know that opportunity of exploitation will be minimised. They want somebody without a union so that they can exploit them. The time they want a union is at the end of the contract and not much can be done"* (Jackson, 18/08/11)

Webster and Von Holdt (2010) argue that unions run a danger of being marginalised and losing members if they do not adjust to accommodate the situation of workers. Webster and Von Holdt (2010), however, remain optimistic about the prospects of unions finding new sources of power and responding effectively. However, there are pessimists who object and believe that trade unions have largely become obsolete in a globalising world. Standing (2009) believes the rise of the 'Precariat' meant the end of labourism and that informal workers are not organisable.

The second challenge in terms of organising identified by Jackson of SATAWU related to the generational gap between the organising tools of the union and the young generation of workers. The challenge of the generational gap and the perceived inability of the union to attract the new generation speaks to debates around organisational modernisation. Organisational modernisation is a problematic term, mainly because of the teleological connotations associated with it (Buhlungu, 2010). However, the term is useful in describing the enduring processes of change, which result from the quest of realising organisational goals and ensuring organisational sustainability. Organisational modernisation refers to processes aimed at converting temporary movement into permanent organisation (Buhlungu, 2010). These processes seek to ensure that trade unions are sufficiently flexible to adapt to changing internal and external circumstances. These include operational and strategic decisions and actions as well as changes in organisational structures and political inclinations. Processes of organisational modernisation include the daily processes involved in ensuring the relevance of the organisation towards the prevailing social circumstances (Buhlungu, 2010). SATAWU faces a challenge in terms of findings ways to respond to the new generation of workers. To achieve this, processes of organisational modernisation are inevitable and central. The issue of organisational modernisation speaks to the following two quotes.

> *"We seem to not be prepared for the organising of young workers because the instruments that we are using are instruments that were used in olden days and are they relevant to the young workers of today or not? Because if you talk [young] workers [you will find that] they are more religious rather than conscious of the struggle. There is a view that Jesus will one day release them without them having to struggle. So it makes them not to be interested [in the union]. Their religion, Christianity in particular makes*

them believe that unions are part of the devil element. If we do not cross that Rubicon, the interest of young workers joining the union is not going to improve because our instruments talk to the interest of old people rather than the issues that affect young workers" (Jackson 18/08/11)

Research is absolutely central in assisting organisations to make informed strategic decisions about issues concerning their members. Organisational modernisation cannot be ad hoc, but has to be informed by research. SATAWU is aware of this fact. In collaboration with its international federation the union has decided that, research is absolutely crucial if the organisation is to become modernised and more compatible than it already is with the prevailing social circumstances.

"We have agreed as SATAWU that we should conduct research to understand what needs to be done to attract young workers. We are working with our international federation (UNI) to conduct research to have a sense of what needs to be done. For instance the language that the union speaks is not the same language that a young man/woman speaks. There is tsotsi taal involved. That is an issue we need to look at. If you have old people organising young workers, on the language question, will they adjust? A young person will want to be advised on sex issues and an old person doesn't want to talk on sex issues. These are the issues that create barriers within the system that unions are using. The only time they will k now a union, is when they are in trouble" (Jackson, 18/08/11)

The inability of the unions to capture the imagination of young workers has seen the growth of legal services as alternatives and or even substitutes for the union.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to deepen our understanding of the nature of work and lived experiences of private security guards in Johannesburg. Drawing on recent literature on the notion of precariousness from authors like Standing (2011), Barchiesi (2011a) and Candeias (2004), the study aimed to contribute to our understanding of precariousness in post-apartheid South Africa. The study used the nine decent work themes to analyse the work experiences of security guards in Johannesburg. These nine themes assisted in organising a systematic exploration of the nature of work in the PSI in Johannesburg. The findings of the study indicate that the nine themes do not capture the meaning of being a security guard. Themes such as boredom, public perceptions and the uniform, as well as crisis of recognition, illustrate this point.

The findings of this study are not representative of the experiences of the entire population of private security guards; they are based on a small sample randomly selected in Johannesburg, at best they are only indicative of the nature of experiences in the security industry. However, the study also draws on a representative survey of security guards that captures the diversity of work and work experience amongst security guards in Gauteng. Four implications of the findings of the study are identified.

Firstly, to understand working conditions and experiences it is necessary to examine the totality of workers' lives. While surveys are useful, they need to be complimented by in-depth interviews. A methodological point that emerges from the study relates to the idea that, in order to capture the meaning of work, research instruments need to be broadened. An approach that combines quantitative and qualitative methods allows for two levels of analysis. The first allows

for a macro analysis, which is descriptive and mainly useful for policy purposes. The second method allows for a microanalysis, which enables close interrogation of the intricacies, complexities and nuances of experience.

Standing, offers an entry point into thinking about precariousness, but the findings of my research suggest that Barchiesi and Candeias' approaches are apt for understanding precariousness in post-apartheid South Africa.

Secondly, the findings illustrate Barchiesi's (2011) objection to the centrality of employment as a way of getting out of poverty, guaranteeing social inclusion and a decent life. Having a job is an opportunity to participate in the labour market, but this may turn out to be a source of great disappointment for those who hold the view that employment is a way out of poverty. The ways in which workers participate in the labour market is what makes them poor (Barchiesi, 2010: 225). Poverty is not specific to the unemployed but is also known among those who earn wages or salaries (Barchiesi, 2010:225). Security guards in Johannesburg felt that they were poor and unable to maintain and sustain their livelihoods. Some in fact saw participation in the labour market as the primary reason for their relative social vulnerability and material deprivation. Similar to Ally's (2009:88) argument about domestic workers in post-apartheid South Africa, The study found that outsourced security guards can be regarded as amongst the most exploited, oppressed and vulnerable workers. They experienced work as a precarious activity characterised by tensions, uncertainty, and tremendous insecurity. Some highlighted the psychological effects produced by the tension between the social imagination of work, the expectation of work and its actual manifestation in reality.

This finding elucidates the gap between the imagination of work as a requisite condition to earning a living and escaping poverty and the actual reality on the ground – that of employment as a vehicle of poverty and material deprivation. The findings seem to point towards the third position on the discourse of decent work. Proponents of this position argue that jobs are utterly precarious and decent work is not achievable under capitalism.

Thirdly, the reality of insecure work, inadequate wage levels, the relative absence of benefits in general and the rising cost of social reproduction means that security guards in Johannesburg experience work and live as a process of 'double precariousness'. 'Double precariousness is constituted by the contrast between the precarization of labour on the one hand, and the rising expenditure required for social reproduction on the other' (Candeias, 2004: 1).

Double precariousness is an experiential social crisis linked to the workplace and exacerbated by the rising cost of social reproduction. In order to understand work and precariousness, we need not only look at the workplace but also include social reproduction. Work, not only entails those processes taking place at the point of production, but also involves the vital social processes that often take place in the household. Social reproduction is a key dimension of work, and without it, production may not even occur in the first place.

Fourthly, workers are not passive subjects but exercise agency and synthesise life strategies attempting to cope and or reduce the extent and effects of precariousness. Some risked their lives, walking over 3.83km at 4:00am from Berea to Mellville, while some risked their health by occupying unhygienic, rat-infested deserted buildings so that they may be able to send some money home for their children's basic needs – for generational reproduction. In a neo-liberal context of fragmented and declining benefits and social protection measures, a large

section of security guards use community-based social protection schemes, bank investment accounts, funeral plans and so forth as forms of strategic responses to their double precariousness. They do so in spite of their low wages.

The strength of Barchiesi's position is its radical critique; but a potential shortcoming lies in its lack in providing a practical alternative. Barchiesi makes a strong argument, suggesting that decent work is not feasible under capitalism. This seems a valid point, one which I share, but for different reasons. Decent work is not feasible under the current system of neo-liberal capitalism. However, rather than totally rejecting the feasibility of decent work, this case study of security guards in Johannesburg suggests how a realistic strategy from below could be developed in South Africa. By drawing on the government's commitment to decent work, the research identified problem areas and highlighted decent work deficits. The next step will be for the social partners to formulate concrete plans to address problem areas. They would have to do so within their particular context and in light of the constraints and opportunities that faces them. The innovation in this approach is that the research could provide the basis for an evidence-led strategy of overcoming the decent work deficits in vulnerable sectors such as private security guards in Johannesburg[3].

[3] For further development of this argument see Webster (2012)

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Interviews

Security guards (All 24 security guards were interviewed in Johannesburg)

1. Sipho, Braamfontein, 07/08/11
2. Mandla, Braamfontein, 17/09/11 and 25/10/11
3. Rutendo, Park-Station, 25/10/11 and 17/11/11
4. Tshivase, Park-Station, 15/12/11
5. Khensani, Fourways, 25/10/11
6. Fortune, Wits University, 25/10/11
7. Collin, Standton, 9/12/11
8. Prince, Hillbrow, 10/12/11
9. Jonathan, Yeoville, 10/12/11
10. Mohale, Braamfontein, 25/10/11 and 26/10/11
11. William, Carleton Centre, 25/10/11
12. Peter, Sandton, 27/10/11
13. Tendekai, Mellville, 26/10/11 and, 09/10/11
14. Caven, Braamfontein, 15/09/11
15. Tafadzwa, Cresta, 04/09/11 and 18/08/11
16. Maria, Auckland Park, 03/11/11
17. Thandi, Auckland Park, 03 /11/11
18. Charles, Braamfontein, 15 /09/11

19. Albert, Yeoville, 14/09/11

20. Lenzo, Fourways, 10/11/11

21. Khutso, Mellville, 26/06/11

22. Simon, Parktown, 08/11/11

23. Robert, Braamfontein, 26/10/11

24. Richard, Soweto, 20/08/11

Employers, Industry players, Union.

25. Cyril, office bearer of a multinational security company, Sandton, 28/10/11

26. Benjamin, Employer, Hillbrow, 05/11/11

27. Conradie, CEO of Security Industry Alliance, Wanderers Cricket Club, Johannesburg, 08/12/11

28. Stefan Benhorst, Manager of law enforcement division of PSIRA, Centurion, Pretoria, 13/09/11

29. Simon Jackson, former SATAWU national Security sector coordinator, SATAWU head office , Johannesburg, 18/08/11

30. Enock Manyoni, SATAWU regional coordinator, Johanneburg, 06/10/11