

Fatigue in the Workplace: Causes, Consequences and Strategies for Mitigation

A Study of Family-Owned Hospitality Businesses in London

Abstract

Workplace fatigue has emerged as one of the issues of growing significance in the field of organisational and occupational health studies especially in service oriented work environments where the work hours are irregular and where the occupational emotion labour is high. Hospitality industry is particularly susceptible to the problems of fatigue which may adversely influence the health of employees, their productivity and the quality of services. The family owned hospitality businesses can experience more challenges of dealing with fatigue because they have fewer resources and informal management structure and the work and family life are not separated. This paper investigates the causes and effects of workplace fatigue and mitigation strategies of workplace fatigue in family owned hospitality businesses in London using a mixed-method design based on Job demands-Resource (JD-R) framework. A survey was conducted on 50 hospitality workers to gain quantitative data on fatigue and sleepiness validated measures and to gain qualitative information semi-structured interviews were conducted with owners and managers. The results show that both acute and chronic fatigue are major causes of working long hours, emotional labour and insufficient recovery. Coupled with reduced performance, diminished motivation as well as diminished wellbeing, fatigue had a close relationship. The paper ends with a proposal of evidence based, low cost and practical strategies that can be implemented by small and family owned hospitality enterprises in order to reduce fatigue and boost organisational sustainability.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	6
1.1 Background to Workplace Fatigue.....	6
1.2 Fatigue in the Hospitality Sector	6
1.3 Family-Owned Hospitality Businesses and Fatigue	7
1.4 Research Gap and Rationale.....	8
1.5 Theoretical Framework: Job Demands–Resources Model	8
1.6 Research Aim and Objectives.....	9
1.7 Significance and Structure of the Dissertation	9
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	11
2.1 Introduction to Workplace Fatigue Literature	11
2.2 Conceptualising Workplace Fatigue	12
2.3 The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model.....	14
2.4 Emotional Labour and Fatigue in Hospitality Work	16
2.5 Fatigue, Wellbeing and Performance Outcomes	18
2.6 Fatigue in Family-Owned Businesses.....	19
2.7 Organisational Fatigue Management Strategies.....	21
2.8 Summary and Research Gap	23
Chapter 3: Methodology	24
3.1 Introduction	24
3.2 Research Philosophy	24
3.3 Research Approach	25
3.4 Research Design: Mixed-Methods Strategy	27
3.5 Sampling Strategy and Research Context.....	28
3.6 Data Collection Methods.....	29

3.6.1 Quantitative Data Collection	29
3.6.2 Qualitative Data Collection	29
3.7 Data Analysis Techniques	30
3.8 Reliability, Validity and Trustworthiness.....	30
3.9 Ethical Considerations	31
3.10 Chapter Summary.....	31
Chapter 4: Quantitative Findings	32
4.1 Introduction to Quantitative Findings	32
4.2 Respondent Demographic Profile	32
4.3 Cognitive Fatigue and Alertness at Work.....	34
4.4 Workload Pressure and Fatigue Development	36
4.5 Recovery Difficulties and Work Scheduling	37
4.6 Fatigue and Work Performance	39
4.7 Emotional Wellbeing and Mood Impacts.....	41
4.8 Normalisation of Fatigue in Hospitality Work	42
4.9 Chapter Summary.....	46
Chapter 5: Qualitative Findings	48
5.1 Introduction to Qualitative Findings.....	48
5.2 Workload Intensity and Role Multiplicity	48
5.3 Informal Scheduling and Recovery Challenges	50
5.4 Emotional Labour and Customer Expectations.....	51
5.5 Normalisation of Fatigue in Family-Owned Hospitality Businesses	52
5.6 Constraints and Opportunities for Fatigue Management	53
5.7 Chapter Summary.....	54
Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations	55

6.1 Introduction	55
6.2 Summary of Key Findings.....	55
6.3 Integration with the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model	57
6.4 Practical and Managerial Implications	58
6.5 Recommendations for Fatigue Mitigation	59
6.6 Limitations of the Study	60
6.7 Directions for Future Research	61
6.8 Chapter Conclusion	61
References	62

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background to Workplace Fatigue

Fatigue in the workplace has become an important and an increasing issue in the modern organisations especially in organisations that have high labour requirement and service oriented organisations. Traditionally fatigue became a recognised phenomenon in the period of the Industrial Revolution when the long-term working hours, unfavorable working conditions, and laxity of the regulations were leading to the physical exhaustion of the workers and a high level of accidents. Further growth in occupational health, ergonomics, and industrial psychology set the connection between exhaustion, waning performance, and worksecurity (Azwar et al., 2018). Today, the notion of fatigue is not perceived only as a temporary physical state, but as the phenomenon that comprises physical, cognitive, and emotional burnout caused by the excessive workload and insufficient rest (Lock et al., 2018).

Fatigue has always been linked to poor concentration ability, limited decision-making, emotional dysregulation and poor wellbeing. Organisationally, fatigue also leads to reduced productivity, high levels of errors, absenteeism, presenteeism, and employee turnover (Miraglia and Johns, 2016). Due to the growing demands of work environment and the rising frequency of flexible work arrangements, fatigue is now a critical concern, not only when it comes to the health of workers, but also organisational performance.

1.2 Fatigue in the Hospitality Sector

The hospitality industry is one of the most exhausting working conditions because it depends on long working hours, employment shifts, direct work with customers as well as changes in demand during the season. The workers are often obliged to work extended and odd hours, unpredictable workloads, and remain emotionally engaged with clients on a high level. All these demands put a significant burden on physical and psychological resources exposing them to fatigue and burnout (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2016).

Employees in service-based positions are required to always exercise a high level of smiling despite any stress or fatigue affective experience, and this process is often termed emotional labour (Hochschild, 2017). Prolonged emotional control has been observed to escalate emotional exhaustion and fatigue especially in hospitality where customer satisfaction is among the core aspects of organisational performance (Grandey and Gabriel, 2015). The pressure on hospitality employees in large cities like London is further compounded by high cost of living, labour supply shortage and high competition. The post-pandemic operational limitations have also contributed to these difficulties, which has made the fatigue a chronic and multifaceted problem in the sector.

1.3 Family-Owned Hospitality Businesses and Fatigue

Hospitality companies are owned by families and comprise a large portion of the UK hospitality industry and contribute significantly to the local economies, generation of employment and identity to the community. Although they are economically and socially significant, they frequently have a little financial and human resources, unofficial management and a high dependency on family labour (Olu-Owolabi et al., 2020). These traits can result in more exposure to the risks of fatigue on the family and non-family employees.

Family businesses often have a rather weak separation between work and personal life and as a result, the owners and employees focus on business continuity rather than rest and recovery. They might create a stronger feeling of responsibility amongst family members to work extra hours, fill staffing gaps or be systematically at work especially during the high trading times. The family-owned business in contrast to bigger hospitality organisations can have no formal human resource functions, no structured scheduling systems and no fatigue management policies. Fatigue can be overlooked or made part of daily working life and this makes the likelihood of growing up to persistent exhaustion and declining wellbeing even higher.

1.4 Research Gap and Rationale

Whereas there has been extensive research on workplace fatigue in large organisations and industries that require safety like in the healthcare sector, aviation and transport, relatively little has been done on fatigue in small family-owned hospitality enterprises. Most of the existing literature often presumes that there are formal organisational structures, normative working practices and wellbeing resources dedicated to formal organisations which are often not available to small businesses (Darwent et al., 2015). Therefore, the literature gap in the subject of fatigue experience, coping and alleviation in a family-operated hospitality environment is significant.

Moreover, hospitality literature concentrates more on the large hotels or multinational chains making it hard to be applied to the small business with limited resource capacity and informal management practices. The significance of filling this gap lies not just in understanding workplace fatigue from an academic perspective but also in coming up with effective and place-specific measures that can be used to address the reality that family-owned hospitality businesses are real. This study addresses this gap by discussing fatigue based on the employee and managerial viewpoints in family owned hospitality businesses in London.

1.5 Theoretical Framework: Job Demands–Resources Model

In this study, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model is taken as the main model to analyze the workplace fatigue. The JD-R model suggests that employee wellbeing and performance are determined by a combination of job demands and job resources (Galanakis and Tsitouri, 2022). Job demands are related to workload, time pressure, and emotional labour necessitating long-term effort and being linked to physical and psychological costs. There are job resources such as autonomy, social support, and recovery opportunities, which manage the influence of demands and support the engagement (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

Employees tend to have fatigue, burnout and disengagement when job demands are higher than the resources available to them. The JD-R model has been especially applicable to hospitality settings, where emotional and physical challenges are frequently present, as well as scarce resources of an organisation. Its use in the context of family-owned hospitality enterprises allows to take a systematic study of the process of fatigue formation and how resource-based interventions can reduce its impact.

1.6 Research Aim and Objectives

Aim

The aim of the research is to find the reasons and effects of fatigue in hospitality businesses which are owned by families in London and mitigation process.

Objectives

- To determine the major psychological and organisational drivers of workplace fatigue in family owned hospitality businesses.
- To investigate the correlation between fatigue in the workplace, the performance of the employees and wellbeing.
- To investigate the perceptions of fatigue among managers and the current strategies of fatigue management in employees.
- To present feasible cost-effective measures to manage fatigue in family-owned hospitality business.

1.7 Significance and Structure of the Dissertation

The study has a number of reasons as to why it is important. It has an academic contribution to the few previous studies that explore the subject of workplace fatigue in small, family-owned hospitality businesses, and extends the use of the JD-R model to a poorly studied organisational setting. In practice, the study offers evidence-based recommendations in accordance with the realities of small hospitality businesses, where

resources are limited and informal management practices are predominant. The findings will help the target audience (business owners and managers) to enhance employee wellbeing without undermining operational sustainability by making choices that are feasible, and cost-effective.

The dissertation is organised in the following way. Chapter 2 introduces a literature review of the existing literature on the topic of workplace fatigue, emotional labour as well as the JD-R model, revealing the major theoretical issues and research gaps in the context of family-owned hospitality business. The methods of the research including research design, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations are presented in chapter 3. Chapter 4 introduces and discusses the quantitative research results based on the data received through employee surveys and Chapter 5 examines the qualitative research based on the interviews with the owners and managers. Chapter 7 summarises the results, comments on their theoretical and practical implications and provides recommendations, limitations and future research directions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to Workplace Fatigue Literature

Fatigue at the workplace has emerged as a major issue in the study of organisational behaviour, occupational health and human resource management. The increasing scholarly interest is indicative of broader shifts in workplaces today, such as longer work hours, more task-demanding jobs, emotional labour requirements and a lack of distinction between work and personal life (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). Fatigue has now come to be generally accepted as a multidimensional phenomenon that transcends the short-term experience of fatigue to encompass long-term physical, cognitive and affective fatigue.

The initial studies of fatigue were largely centred on physiological exhaustion that occurred as a result of increased physical work load and insufficient rest (Young and Steel, 2015). Recent research focuses on the emotional and psychological aspects of fatigue especially in service-oriented sectors where employees must manage emotions and continue to perform in the presence of customers despite the stressful situations (Jeung et al., 2018). Emotional labour and mental strains have proven to be extremely important factors of fatigue as work has become more service-oriented and customer-centric.

Hospitality industry is one of the particularly applicable areas where workplace fatigue can be considered because of the dependence on irregular working hours, long working hours, and constant contact with people. Much of the fatigue related literature is based on large organisations or other safety pertinent industries, including healthcare, aviation and transport (Garrick et al., 2018). This begs the question of whether the current results can be extended to the situation of small, family-owned hospitality enterprises which can run on limited resources and informal management systems.

In this chapter, the critical review of the literature in the field of the workplace fatigue will be conducted and its application to the hospitality and family-owned business context will be examined. It also integrates theoretical views, the evidence, and organisational

structures to create a conceptual basis on the study and to determine obvious gaps in the current literature.

2.2 Conceptualising Workplace Fatigue

Workplace fatigue is a condition of physical and psychological fatigue that occurs due to continued workload and lack of time off (Brown et al., 2017). In comparison to momentary tiredness which can be alleviated by taking temporary breaks, workplace fatigue is cumulative and affects a person negatively in terms of his or her capabilities to perform the tasks effectively in the long run. Modern researchers tend to view fatigue as a complex phenomenon involving physical, cognitive, and emotional aspects of the phenomenon, which is characteristic of the modern working environment (Linton et al., 2015).

Physical exhaustion has generally been linked to the long working hours, physical activity, repetition of activities and poor rest times. In hospitality industry, workers are often obligated to stand long hours, handle things by hand and perform fast services all of which are sources of physical fatigue (Macgregor-Curtin et al., 2022). Constant physical exhaustion does not only limit stamina but it can also risk musculoskeletal issues and work-related injuries especially in workplaces where the intensity of work is high and the staffing is limited.

Cognitive fatigue is a loss of mental power caused by a prolonged state of concentration, information processing and decision-making. It is shown in the form of less concentration, slower reaction, difficulty in making judgements, and less ability to solve problems (Crain et al., 2018). The probability of service mistakes and accidents in the hospitality environment can be highly affected by the presence of cognitive fatigue as hospitality employees need to perform multiple tasks simultaneously, respond quickly to customer demands and address time constraints. These risks are also especially problematic in small enterprises where a single wrong decision can have out proportionately great operational and reputational impacts.

Emotional exhaustion is the effect of long-term emotional control and relationship requirements especially in customer-faced jobs. Hospitality employees are supposed to have positive emotional expression irrespective of personal stress, workload and exhaustion. This can be an emotional drain, aggravated with time and disengagement due to this sustained emotional work (Jeung et al., 2018). Emotional labour is closely allied to emotional fatigue which has also been determined as a major antecedent to burnout in jobs that involve service.

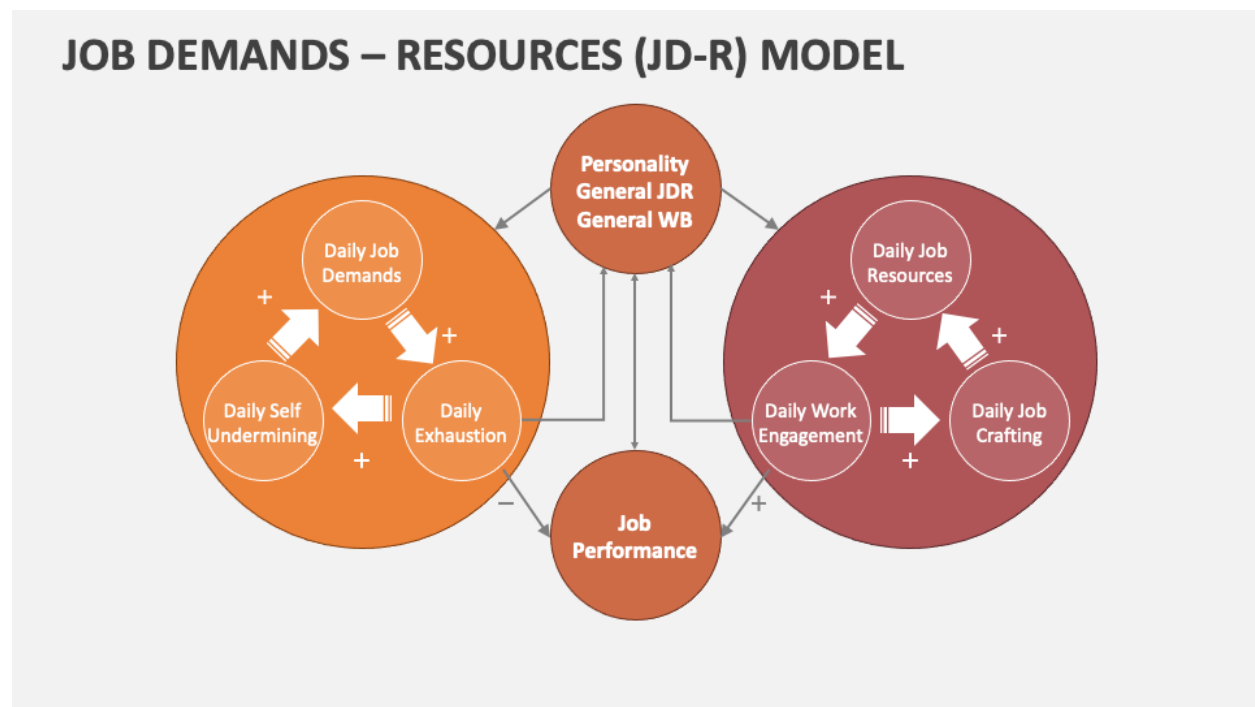
There is widespread differentiation of acute and chronic fatigue by researchers. Acute fatigue is developed in the event of brief periods of the strenuous workload and is typically reversible with proper rest and relaxation. Chronic fatigue becomes cumulative as the possibilities to rest are inadequately provided continuously, creating long-term effects of decreased wellbeing, motivation and job performance (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). Burnout, emotional exhaustion and decreased organisational commitment have been identified as strongly related with chronic fatigue.

The effects of workplace fatigue do not only consider the wellbeing of the individual, but also organisational consequences. Empirical research has always associated fatigue with low productivity, high absenteeism, presenteeism, work-related accidents and turnover intentions (Miraglia and Johns, 2016). These results can be especially harmful in small and family-owned hospitality companies whereby staffing capacity and the flexibility of operations is limited.

Although it has developed concepts extensively, critics suggest that fatigue studies are generally insensitive to context and are not much concerned with the fact that organisational size, ownership structure and informal management practices are determinants of fatigue experiences (Rudin-Brown and Filtness, 2023). This weakness would be particularly important to consider in the research about family-run hospitality enterprises, and it is necessary to conduct the study that would be context-specific and reflect the dynamics specific to the workplace and fatigue.

2.3 The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model offers an extremely popular and adaptable theoretical framework approach to comprehending the impacts of workplace factors on employee wellbeing, motivation, and performance (Molino et al., 2016). In contrast to previous stress models, which concentrated on the few job factors, JD-R model postulates that all work characteristics can be grouped into two broad categories known as job demands and job resources. This flexibility renders the model especially appropriate in studying the various organisational settings such as service-based and small business setting.



The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

Job demands are physical, cognitive or emotional work demands that demand continual efforts and thus are related with psychological and physiological costs. Some of the common job demands are workload, time pressure, emotional labour, role ambiguity and work-life conflict (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). In hospitality, these requirements are further frenzied by the long working hours, the disordered pattern of working shifts, and the unceasing contact with the customers. Time and again, employees face the pressure of

multitasking and at the same time be able to handle emotional outbursts which cumulatively gives rise to a cumulative demand profile which exposes them to fatigue (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2016).

Employees will have higher chances of experiencing fatigue, emotional exhaustion and burnout when the job demands are high and sustained and when there is no opportunity to rest. Empirical research outcomes are always highly correlated with high job demands and negative wellbeing conditions such as chronic fatigue, and disengagement (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). The effects of high demands can be especially intense in the hospitality situations because of the nature of service delivery, which is intense and immediate, and the customer has a keen eye on customer performance.

Job resources describe physical, psychological, social or organisational elements of work that assist in cutting job demands, goal attainment and individual growth (Schaufeli, 2017). The main employment resources are autonomy, supportive supervision, collegial support, equitable and predictable working schedule and a chance to take a rest and recover. These resources are of great significance in mitigating the adverse impacts of high demands and decreasing fatigue probability. The JD-R model also suggests a motivational process according to which sufficient resources result in work engagement, resilience and long-term performance.

The applicability of job resources is especially significant in the hospitality environment, where the high demands are typically inevitable. Researchers that utilise the JD-R model in the hospitality industry have illustrated that individuals can reduce fatigue and burnout with supportive leadership, social support and recovery opportunities even when working in high-stress service settings (Karatepe and Olugbade, 2016). A large part of this empirical data comes out of the large-hotel or multinational hospitality organisations which are more formalised in management structure and more likely to access organisational resources.

The supply and type of job resource can vary significantly in small and family-owned hospitality businesses. Formal resources might include formal scheduling systems, a specific human resource function not to mention the access to formal resources in case

of financial constraints, informal management practices and employment of family labour. Workers of family-owned companies are likely to face the situation of disproportion between heavy job demands and scarce resources and become more prone to fatigue. The involvement of the family can also create distinctive resources such as emotional support, shared values and a strong sense of commitment which can partially shield fatigue and increase resilience (Taris and Schaufeli, 2015).

The JD-R model would be an excellent prism to analyse these dynamic and context-related dynamics. It is flexible since both traditional organisational resources may be included as well as informal, relational ones which are inherent to the family-owned business. Through the JD-R framework applied in the context of family-owned hospitality enterprises, the study aims to build on the current theory and offer a more in-depth insight into the interaction of job demands and resources as the theory predictors of workplace fatigue within under-researched organisational settings.

2.4 Emotional Labour and Fatigue in Hospitality Work

The term emotional labour is used to describe how employees manage their emotions so as to conform to the expectations of an organisation when interacting with one another (Hochschild, 2017). The focus of emotional labour in a hospitality set up is at the middle of service provision because workers are anticipated to exhibit friendliness, patience, empathy and considerateness irrespective of their interior emotional condition or exterior pressure. This consistent need to regulate emotional displays causes a lot of psychological pressure on the staff and has been largely linked to emotional depletion and job burnout (Jeung et al., 2018).

Two main strategies of emotional labour are generally differentiated by scholars surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting means the repression of real feelings and appearance of the desired emotional behaviours in an organisation without adjusting the inner feelings. Deep acting on the other hand entails trying to match the internal emotional conditions of oneself with anticipation of emotional expression (Hochschild, 2017). The studies constantly show that surface acting is more psychologically challenging and

correlated with increased emotional exhaustion levels, fatigue and low job satisfaction than deep acting (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). The reason behind this is that surface acting generates emotional dissonance to be filled through enduring self-regulation that empty emotional resources with time.

Surface acting is high in the hospitality settings because there is high customer interaction, time pressure and performance checking. Even when employees are stressed, under the pressure of work load or have an interpersonal conflict, they may be obligated to have positive emotional displays during peak service periods. These circumstances exacerbate emotional requirements and exposure to emotional fatigue. Empirical research has shown that a long-term participation in emotional labour leads not only to emotional but also to cognitive exhaustion because workers have to be constantly attentive and change their emotional manifestations when executing complex service work (Lesener et al., 2019).

Small, family-owned hospitality businesses might particularly experience emotional labour in high degrees. These environments might increase demands on emotional performance, in terms of close relationships with customers, repeat clientele and maximum community associations. This can further put a strain on employees to ensure that they represent the family business in a positive manner, safeguard its reputation and preserve the relationships that the company has acquired over a long period of time. Emotional fatigue risk may be aggravated because of the conflicting professional and family roles of members working in the business because of the shared nature of the roles it may also intensify emotional strain. In spite of these dynamics, emotional labour in hospitality enterprises that are run by families is an under-explored area of existing studies.

Cumulative fatigue has also been indicated as a result of sustained emotional labour and physical or cognitive demands. Emotional regulation combined with wearing long hours, distorted schedules and limited opportunities to rest can lead to a cumulative burden of fatigue in the employee which can impact various aspects of wellbeing (Lesener et al., 2019). This accumulated stress can over time cause disengagement, burnout and deterioration of service quality.

The results indicate the relevance of emotional labour as a key factor in hospitality fatigue studies. Knowledge of role of emotional labour in fatigue is of special significance to small and family-owned hospitality organisations where emotional demands tend to be informal, normalised and lacked by formal organisational resources. The incorporation of emotional labour within the wider paradigms of fatigue, like Job Demands-Resources model which offers a more coherent picture of how fatigue is developed in the hospitality work.

2.5 Fatigue, Wellbeing and Performance Outcomes

Much of the existing research evidence shows that workplace fatigue has a close relationship with various adverse wellbeing and performance outcomes at both personal and organisational levels. Employees who are exhausted usually lose focus, have poor judgment and slow reaction time which raises the risk of inaccurate service delivery, accidents and safety incidents (Crain et al., 2018). Such impairments can have a direct impact on customer satisfaction, service quality and organisational reputation in hospitality settings where service delivery is hurried and customer-based.

Fatigue may cause cognitive impairment that will affect the performance of employees in terms of handling various tasks, reacting positively to customer demands and make sound judgment when time deadlines are involved. The effects are especially objectionable in the context of hospitality areas where employees frequently work under high-demand conditions that involve being attentive and controlling their emotions. The studies indicate that service industries fatigue-related errors can cause a decline in performance as well as an emotional strain, and this effect is reciprocal which further contributes to exhaustion (Hilty et al., 2022).

Presenteeism has also been closely related to fatigue, whereby employees can still report to work even when they are physically or psychologically ill. Hospitality is particularly prone to presenteeism in the face of labour shortages, job instability and also cultural practices that value attendance over health (Miraglia and Johns, 2016). Although presenteeism might seem to decrease short-term absenteeism the practice is

characterised by low productivity, rising cases of errors and recovery time. With time, presenteeism can be the cause of chronic fatigue and increased chances of burnout.

Workplace chronic fatigue is also linked to negative mental health consequences, such as emotional exhaustion, burnout, anxiety and depressive symptoms (Maslach and Leiter, 2016). Emotional exhaustion as a fundamental element of burnout indicates the loss of emotional and psychological resources and has been evidenced to be predictive of disengagement, decreased job satisfaction and intention to move out of the organisation. The relationship between fatigue and emotional exhaustion could be especially strong in hospitality environments, given that emotional labour is a key work requirement in those environments.

In terms of organisations, fatigue also leads to an increased rate of absenteeism and turnover intention which poses a big challenge in operations. These effects are particularly disastrous to small and family-owned hospitality businesses because of their limited capacity to staff and because of their dependence on informal knowledge, as well as working relationships. Such aspects of employee turnover can lead to loss of tacit knowledge, higher training expenses and service continuity. Additionally, chronic exhaustion among the owners and other family members might also undermine organisational resilience and sustainability.

The literature suggests that being fatigued at work has profound implications on the wellbeing and performance of employees as well as organisational performance. These results highlight the significance of the problem of fatigue as a personal health concern and as a strategic organisational problem, in particular in small and family-owned hospitality businesses.

2.6 Fatigue in Family-Owned Businesses

The major features of the family-owned businesses include the overlap of both family and organisational roles, the lack of formal governance systems and the high level of emotional attachment to the business (Azila-Gbetteor, 2023). Such unique aspects tend to

create a great sense of commitment, loyalty and resilience amongst the family members. The same traits can also make a person more susceptible to workplace burnout especially when the demands of the business are on the rise and when personal boundaries are unclear. To the family, more often than not, family members operate long hours, bear more than one role and bear more workload so as to maintain business continuity at the price of rest and personal wellbeing.

Studies have shown that work-family life boundaries may lead to high levels of stress and fatigue, particularly when people have difficulties in psychologically disengaging themselves with their work-related duties (Nguyen and Sawang, 2016). This issue is especially acute in family-owned hospitality firms that require a significant workload and family labour in high seasonal periods. Family members might have a moral/emotional responsibility to always be available, fill in the gaps in staffing or concentrate on business priorities at the expense of recovery which may cumulatively cause fatigue over time.

These dynamics are further enhanced in the hospitality context. The unusual working hours, extended shifts and changing seasons usually demand adaptability in the individual schedules of the family members to adapt them to the demands of the operations. The family members might not have formal ways to balance work, take rest, or even split tasks as is the case with the employees in the larger organisations. Fatigue can be normalised in the family business culture and chances are low that it will be perceived as a legitimate organisational problem that needs to be intervened with.

These dynamics may also apply to the non-family employees of the family-owned hospitality businesses. Close-knit family relationships and informal management practices may lead to ambiguity of role, expectations and boundaries. The employees might feel the need to replicate the intensity of the work of the family members or they may be afraid to raise issues regarding fatigue particularly because they would be seen as less dedicated to the work. These conditions are likely to increase fatigue and lower perceived organisational support.

The literature on fatigue among family-owned hospitality businesses is scarce despite the fact that family-owned businesses are the most common in this industry. A lot of the

fatigue literature available is that which is conducted within large organisations or publicly listed firms with no consideration of the organisational and relational dynamics of family enterprises. This gap limits the knowledge of the interaction of family involvement and job demands and resources that influence the fatigue experiences.

This is a gap that needs to be addressed to come up with context sensitive models of fatigue that address reality of family owned hospitality businesses. This paper aims to deepen the current theory by exploring the topic of fatigue, in the context of family-based frameworks and informal organisational forces and offer both scholarly and practice-based valuable insights.

2.7 Organisational Fatigue Management Strategies

The importance of organisational strategies to deal with workplace fatigue has been ranked among the growing research within the domain of occupational health and human resource management. Some of the common methods are working hour regulation, sufficient rest breaks, sleep hygiene and supportive management practices with the primary focus on employee wellbeing (Gifkins et al., 2024). These strategies can be formalised in large organisations and safety critical industries which are often managed by fatigue risk management systems (FRMS) which seek to detect, monitor and mitigate fatigue risks in a systematic manner.

Formal fatigue management systems are not as applicable to small hospitality businesses. Hospitality businesses run by small and family-owned enterprises are usually constrained in terms of finances, lack of manpower and informal management procedures that hinder the introduction of a universal fatigue management system. This often makes fatigue management a haphazard, reactive or even absent affair in such settings. The existence of this gap has created the necessity of alternative strategies that prove not only effective but also viable in resource-constrained situations.

Studies are also highlighting the significance of low-cost and context-sensitive interventions that should be done in accordance with the reality of small businesses. Fair

and predictable scheduling practices have been cited to be an important reason behind fatigue reduction since employees can now better plan their rest and recovery (Banks et al., 2019). Even the slightest change in the stability of schedules, like giving at least some notification of shifts or avoiding too many days of working in a row can be a significant change in the fatigue levels in the hospitality environment.

Another important fatigue management strategy is open communication with respect to wellbeing. Stigma can be minimised and early intervention supported by supportive management practices which encourage employees to talk about workload pressures and fatigue experiences. Open communication can also be especially useful in revealing their problems of fatigue, which will then be prevented before turning into chronic fatigue or burnout in the case of hospitality businesses that are owned by families, where informal connections dominate.

Basic fatigue awareness and sleep education programmes are also found to be effective and low cost interventions. The goals of such initiatives are to raise awareness of the symptoms of fatigue, the need to recover and the value of sleep hygiene, and empower the employees to make healthier work-rest habits (Peukert et al., 2025). Although such programmes might not be as sophisticated as formal systems, they have pragmatic advantages that are in line with the dynamics of small hospitality businesses.

Generally, the literature recommends that the use of formal fatigue management systems might be inappropriate in small hospitality businesses but selective, affordable interventions still can have an effective role to play in the reduction of fatigue. The flexibility of fatigue management strategies, their relationality and integration into day-to-day management practices are especially crucial in the case of family-owned hospitality businesses in which the informality of structures and close working relationships determine organisational life.

2.8 Summary and Research Gap

The proposed literature review shows that workplace fatigue is a multidimensional process that is determined by job demands, emotional labour and recovery opportunities. These dynamics can be strong and explained using JD-R model, but currently, the existing research has mainly been directed towards big organisations and has neglected small, family-owned hospitality businesses.

This has created an unmistakable gap in the empirical studies of fatigue in the context of family-owned hospitality businesses, especially in a combined employee and management context. This paper aims at filling this gap by using the JD-R model to family-owned hospitality businesses in London and defining feasible approaches to mitigation of fatigue.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The chapter presents and supports the methodology that will be used to investigate the fatigue at work among family-owned hospitality businesses in London. This chapter was meant to elaborate how the research aim and objectives were met by using the right research design, data collection methods and analytical methods. Since fatigue at the workplace is not a simple and multidimensional issue, the methodology needed to be able to both measure results and subjective experiences.

To accomplish this, the research will take the mixed-method research design based on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theoretical framework. The quantitative data were gathered to measure fatigue, recovery and sleepiness of hospitality workers, whereas the qualitative data were required to investigate the managerial perceptions, organisational practices and family-business relationships affecting fatigue. This chapter addresses the research philosophy, approach, design, sampling strategy, data collection instruments, data analysis procedures, ethical considerations and the matters of reliability and validity.

3.2 Research Philosophy

The present study is based on a pragmatic research philosophy as it focuses on the practical implications of research and endorses the application of various approaches to solve complex and real-world research issues (Halcomb and Hickman, 2015). Pragmatism does not support the rigid dichotomy between positivism and interpretivism but rather promotes a pragmatic position where the research question is of more importance than deploying a single philosophical tradition. It is an especially suitable method in applied business and management research when the phenomena that are studied in organisations are typically multifaceted and cannot be adequately explained by just one methodological approach.

A phenomenon like workplace fatigue is multidimensional and complex involving both objectively measurable results and subjective experiences. On the one hand, quantitative indicators of fatigue can be examined in the form of exhaustion, sleepiness as well as recovery rates. The nature of fatigue is also individual person perception, organisational culture, managerial practices and the context of organisational environments all of which can only be understood using a qualitative approach. The solely positivist method, with emphasis on measuring and generalising, would risk ignoring the experience of the employees and managers working in family-owned hospitality businesses. On the other hand, a pure interpretivism approach would restrain the capability of establishing patterns, relationships and the commonness of fatigue among a workforce.

The pragmatism approach permits the use of both quantitative and qualitative on the same study so that both methods complement each other. This philosophical position allows adhering to the mixed-method research as the means of reflecting the magnitude of fatigue at the workplace and the contextual factors affecting its formation and management. Such methodological integration is especially useful in the context of family-owned hospitality business where the organisation structure tends to be informal and influenced by personal relations.

Besides, a pragmatic philosophy is close to the applied nature of this study since it is intended to not only advance academic knowledge but also to produce practical suggestions to small hospitality ventures. Focusing on the flexibility of methods and problem-solving, pragmatism can help to create context-specific insights based on empirical evidence and responsive to actual organisational issues. This will make the findings of the study both theoretically informed and practical which will make them more valuable to the owners, managers and employees of family-owned hospitality business.

3.3 Research Approach

The study will use an inductive approach to research which will involve deriving patterns, themes and insights based on empirical data instead of testing predetermined hypotheses. Workplace fatigue research studies in family-owned hospitality businesses

can be considered to be inductive because the current theory presents a general explanatory model yet this needs to be applied to a contextual setting. Induction helps in the exploratory investigation of the situation where there is little empirical evidence available by enabling the occurrence of findings due to the data.

Despite the fact that the conceptual basis of the study is informed by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, the aim of the research is not to test the model statistically and establish causal relationships. JD-R framework is used as a sensitising lens to direct data analysis and to organise the analysis of the interaction of job demands and job resources to facilitate fatigue experiences. This method will permit theoretical direction without limiting the analysis and allow the research to be open to unexplained results and situational dynamics.

Inductive approach is especially applicable where the research is done in under explored organisational settings. The practice of family owned hospitality businesses is markedly different as compared to larger organisations in management, availability of resources, and limits of work and family. It is thus possible that an application of assumptions based on large-corporate environments will miss out critical aspects of the context that affect fatigue. An inductive approach would allow the researcher to embrace the experiences of participants in their own language and come up with findings based on the realities of the organisation.

In general, the inductive research methodology assists the purpose of the study to form a deeper and context-sensitive perception of the phenomenon of fatigue at the workplace. The approach, based on the focus on empirical data and the views of participants, adds to the potential of the study to add new knowledge and make informed practical recommendations applicable to family-owned hospitality business.

3.4 Research Design: Mixed-Methods Strategy

The research design was based on a mixed-methods approach which would provide a thorough and methodologically sound way of achieving the research aim and objectives. Mixed-methods research is based on the method of quantitatively and qualitatively combining methods of studying the same phenomenon into a single study and thus allowing the more full perception of the complex organisational phenomena (Maxwell, 2016). The design will be especially appropriate to study the topic of fatigue in the workplace that involves both the quantifiable variables and the experience.

The quantitative aspect of the research offers quantifiable data of fatigue-related concepts such as the degree of acute fatigue, chronic fatigue, recovery and sleepiness in the employees of the hospitality industry. By applying structured survey tools, one will be able to detect trends and correlations between the variables of fatigue which can provide information on the frequency and severity of fatigue in the family-owned hospitality companies. Quantitative data are thus beneficial in terms of breadth and comparability and help to identify trends among participants.

The qualitative part assists the quantitative results in understanding the perceptions of the managers, organisational practice and family-business dynamics that affect fatigue experiences. Qualitative data obtained through semi-structured interviews with owners and managers can offer the richness and contextual insight that cannot be presently obtained based on the number alone. The use of this method allows to investigate informal management practices, emotional labour expectation and work-family boundary issues typical of family-owned hospitality firms.

Quantitative and qualitative data integration is especially useful in small business research which has informal, relation-based and highly situational organisational processes. The combination of quantitative measures with qualitative insights with the rich information gives the study a deeper and more comprehensive perspective on workplace fatigue than would have been possible with the approach. Moreover, the mixed-methods design enhances the credibility of the results with the help of triangulation

where findings obtained by varying sources of data are compared, corroborated and interpreted jointly.

3.5 Sampling Strategy and Research Context

The paper targets hospitality firms owned by families in London as it represents a diverse, labour intensive and competitive hospitality industry in the city. The Family-owned businesses were characterised as the businesses where the ownership and operational control are owned mostly by family members. This definition is consistent with the literature on the topic of family business and allows defining consistency in the identification of organisations where family input influences the managerial practices and work conditions (DePoy, 2024).

The selection of the participants was conducted using purposive sampling strategy which reduced the selection of the participants to those directly exposed to hospitality work and related fatigue issues. Purposive sampling will fit the exploratory research that aims at gaining profound knowledge about a certain phenomenon in a given context, and not statistical generalisation. To do the quantitative part, the employees were invited to undergo a structured survey which was conducted on the staff members of hospitality businesses owned by families. Fifty (valid) responses were obtained which fits the suggested criteria of exploratory quantitative studies in small organisations and can be analysed descriptively and meaningfully.

To achieve the qualitative aspect, the owners and the managers of family-owned hospitality businesses were chosen to take part in semi-structured interviews. These people were selected because they are closely involved in the main organisational practices such as the scheduling of shifts, allocation of work, staffing process and management of employee wellbeing practices. Their views offer a good understanding of the recognition of fatigue, its interpretation and management process among family-owned hospitality businesses.

In the investigation of fatigue in the workplace, the London context is highly applicable since it consists of structural and environmental pressures. Job demands have been on the rise in the hospitality industry due to the high costs of operation, the competitive nature of the industry, labour shortages and labour instabilities which are bound to rise after the pandemic. Causes of these pressures can further increase the risks of fatigue among the workers and the business owners, and therefore London is the ideal place to conduct the study to be informative. The attention to the given context makes the results more applicable in the context of urban hospitality settings that might encounter similar issues.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

3.6.1 Quantitative Data Collection

A structured questionnaire survey was used to gather quantitative data that was designed to measure fatigue, recovery, and sleepiness at the work place. Validated instruments were used in the survey such as Occupational Fatigue Exhaustion/Recovery (OFERS) Scale and Karolinska Sleepiness Scale (KSS). The reason for their choice is that these instruments are reliable and have been used in numerous studies of occupational health (Wentz et al., 2020).

The questionnaires were surveyed online or paper-based as the participant chooses and has access. The involvement was optional and the respondents were guaranteed of confidentiality and anonymity. Other demographic data were also gathered such as job position and regular working hours to get a contextual background.

3.6.2 Qualitative Data Collection

Semi-structured interviewing of owners and managers of family-owned hospitality businesses was used to gather qualitative data. The semi-structured interviews were selected as a way of ensuring flexibility and at the same time covering the important areas

such as the working hours, emotional labour, fatigue management practices and family-business dynamics.

Face-to-face and online interviews were held, according to the availability of the participants and took about 15 to 20 minutes.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data in order to summarise the levels of acute fatigue, chronic fatigue, recovery, and sleepiness. The relationships existing between fatigue and recovery variables were examined using correlation analysis. The study was exploratory, so inferential statistical testing was restricted because of overgeneralisation.

The thematic analysis was chosen as the method of analysing qualitative data and it was conducted in accordance with the six-phase framework of Braun and Clarke (2023). This included being familiarised with the data, preliminary coding, theme development, review, definition and reporting. The JD-R framework informed the analysis and the emergent themes were also open.

The combination of the quantitative and qualitative results allowed obtaining a more profound interpretation of the fatigue experience and organisational practices.

3.8 Reliability, Validity and Trustworthiness

The issue of reliability and validity was resolved by referring to validated quantitative tools and known methods of analysis. In the past studies, the psychometric properties of the OFER and KSS scales have proved to be strong in measurement reliability.

Qualitative credibility was also boosted by using transcription, systematic coding, and analytical choices transparency. Credibility was ensured by connecting the themes to the

accounts of the participants whereas transferability improved the description of the context at a great detail.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Data collection was done after receiving ethical approval. The participants were informed by providing information sheets detailing the purpose of the study, the procedures and their rights such as the right to withdraw at any stage. All the participants were informed to give consent.

Anonymity and confidentiality were ensured through anonymisation of all the data and safe storage of records in compliance with UK GDPR guidelines. The study does not reveal any business or individual information that can be identified.

3.10 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, methodological framework upon which the study is based has been described in terms of research philosophy, approach, design, sampling, data collection and analysis processes. The proposed mixed-methods approach will be based on pragmatism and the JD-R model to offer a solid framework within the analysis of the workplace fatigue in family-owned hospitality enterprises. The following chapter shows the quantitative results of the employee survey.

Chapter 4: Quantitative Findings

4.1 Introduction to Quantitative Findings

This chapter provides and discusses the quantitative results of the employee survey carried out on the family-owned hospitality companies in London. This chapter has been intended to deal with the research goals of the study by focusing on the extent, character, and perceived effects of fatigue in the workplace of hospitality employees. The quantitative data will give measurable information on fatigue-related experiences such as alertness, work load pressure, recovery challenges, work performance, and emotional wellbeing.

Fifty valid survey responses were obtained by use of a structured and close-ended questionnaire comprising of demographics and Likert-scale statements on workplace fatigue. The level of responses was identified under a five-point Likert scale which is 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2, 3, 4, and 5 = Strongly Agree. The descriptive statistics such as the frequency distributions and patterns of the patterns of responses appropriately analyse the data as the study is exploratory and the sample size is limited.

The results offered are reported in the form of themes which are correlated to the major fatigue dimensions that have been identified during the literature review and they are: cognitive fatigue, workload-related fatigue, recovery issues, performance, and emotional wellbeing. The interpretation of the results is supported with visual representation in the form of bar charts to increase clarity. The chapter is not an inference of statistical testing, but a concise and methodical description of observed trends, which are subsequently combined with qualitative results and theoretical models of other chapters.

4.2 Respondent Demographic Profile

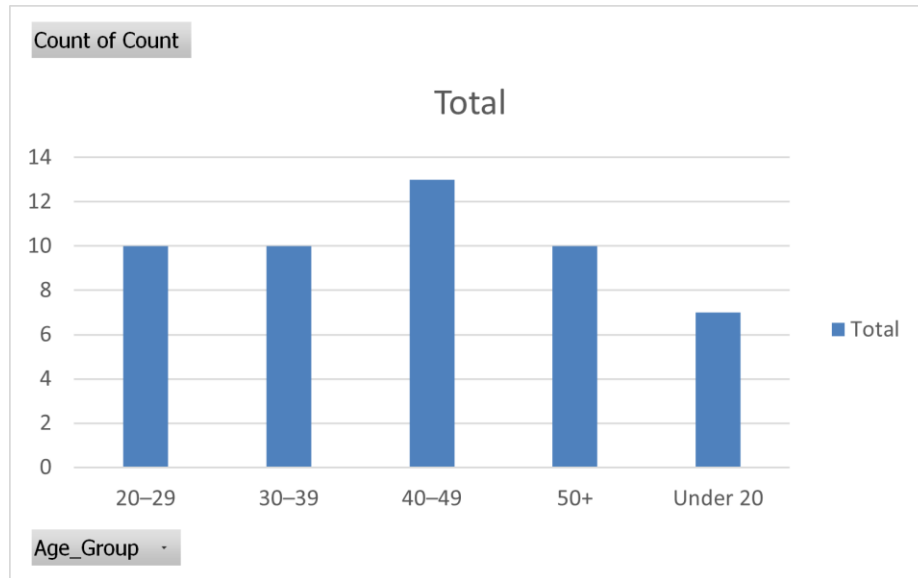
The demographic data will encompass respondents that allow a deeper context about what fatigue in the family-owned hospitality businesses means. The survey also included the variables in the age group, gender, job role, length of service, and working hours per

week, which are some of the important variables that have been identified to contribute to fatigue risk.

The data analysis reveals the respondents were spread over various age categories and the largest percentage was found aged between 20-39 years which is a representation of the general workforce makeup of the hospitality industry. The percentage of the respondents who were 40 years and older was lower and this implies that some employees might not be able to work in the hospitality industry long term due to the physical nature of the job. The sample was quite even in terms of gender, with a slightly greater percentage of those who considered themselves as females, which again aligns with the industry-wide employment patterns in hospitality.

Regarding job roles, the respondents were front of house workers, kitchen workers, supervisors/managers and family members who were involved in the operations. The front-of-house and kitchen personnel were the most represented as the former is numerically dominant when it comes to hospitality environments and the former is exposed to customer-facing jobs and physically challenging ones. The incorporation of the family members is especially pertinent to the given study, as it represents the peculiar organisation of family-owned businesses.

There was also a difference in the length of service with most respondents giving an average of 1-3 years of employment and a few gave more than six years. The range of weekly working hours showed that the most common one was 30-50+ hours, indicating that there is an indicator of extended working hours, which can lead to cumulative fatigue. Taken together, these demographic trends can serve as a background of comprehending the fatigue patterns that are to be presented later.



Demographic summary chart

4.3 Cognitive Fatigue and Alertness at Work

Question 10 that was used to assess cognitive fatigue involved checking the capacity of respondents to stay alert and not develop a sense of sleepiness during the working period. The cognitive alertness is especially imperative in the context of the hospitality setting where employees have to maintain focus, be quick about responding to the needs of the customers and multi-task. Any diminishment of alertness can thus directly impact on the quality of services, safety and efficiency of operation.

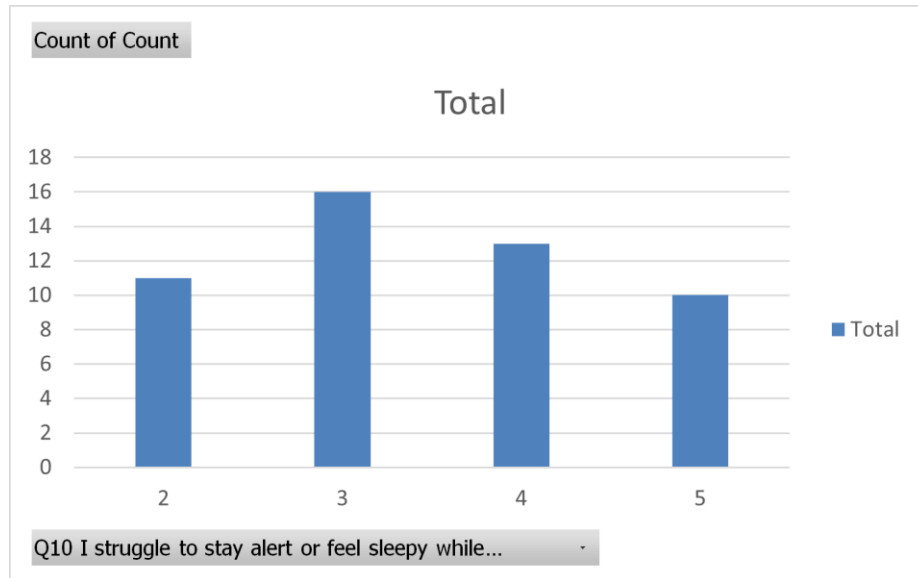


Figure 4.1 will show how the responses to Q10 are distributed.

The findings indicate that answers were majorly concentrated in mid to high end of Likert scale. The majority of the respondents answered the question with the greatest percentage of 3 (Neutral) and next was 4 (Agree) to suggest that a significant number of employees are somewhat struggling to stay alert when at work. Notably, a substantial proportion of respondents chose 5 (Strongly Agree) which implies that extreme fatigue of the cognitive nature is a usual experience of a substantial fraction of the working population. On the contrary, fewer respondents responded to lower agreement categories meaning that issues of alertness are not the preserve of a few respondents.

It is this trend that indicates that cognitive fatigue is a prevalent and consistent problem in family-owned hospitality companies. Long hours of work, irregular work schedules, working late hours or early hours as well as lack of time to rest in between shifts are likely to cause the lack of vigilance and sleepiness. The fact that neutral responses were quite numerous also could represent normalisation of fatigue when employees are finding tiredness as the natural or inevitable state of work in hospitality as well as the condition that does not have to be addressed by an organisation.

The consequences of cognitive fatigue are great. Loss of consciousness has been related to loss of concentration, slow reaction time, and loss of decision making skills which predispose one to making errors and service failures. Cognitive fatigue could also lessen the capacity of a customer-facing employee to communicate with customers effectively in areas that would influence customer satisfaction and the business reputation. In general, these results illustrate the significance of cognitive fatigue in the sample companies and emphasise the need to consider alertness and recovery as the components of effective fatigue management practices.

4.4 Workload Pressure and Fatigue Development

The question 11 was used to test workload-related fatigue by asking the respondents whether they considered their workload as a major factor contributing to the fatigue experience. Workload intensity is one of the main job demands within a framework of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model that must be maintained through physical, cognitive and emotional energy. This aspect is especially relevant to the hospitality environment, where labour shortage, time constraints and changing customer demand are typical.

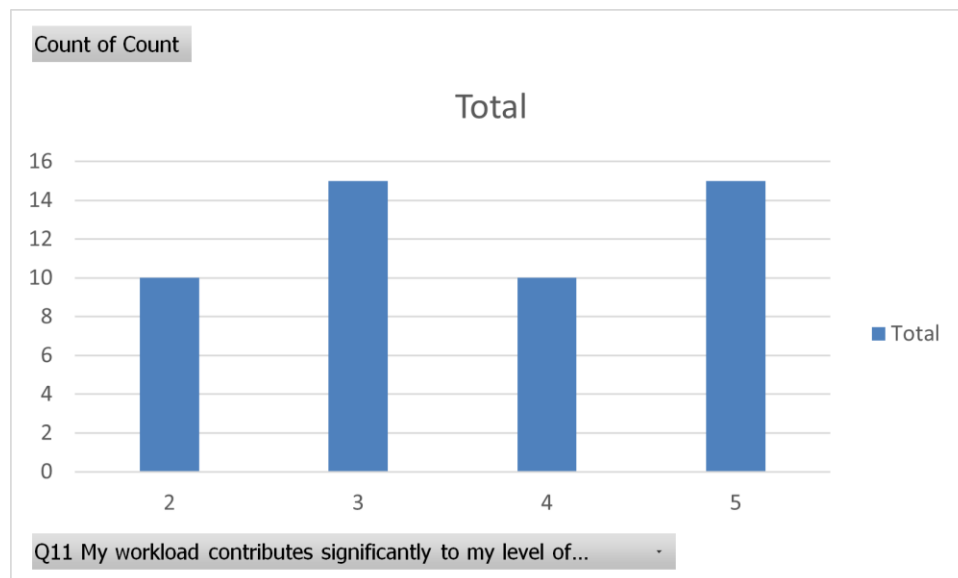


Figure 4.2 shows the distribution of the responses to Q11

The findings demonstrate a strong inclination to agreement which means that workload is a strongly held idea as one of the primary causes of fatigue. Maximum response rates were recorded at "3" (Neutral) and "5" (Strongly Agree) and a large percentage of the respondents also gave answer of "4" (Agree). Suggestion of high agreement means that work overload is not an unspoken or implicit situation but a form of motivation towards exhaustion in employees. Quite on the contrary, the number of respondents who disagreed is comparatively low, which proves the assumption that workload pressure is a common thing and not an individual issue.

Such results are indicative of the logistical nature of family-owned hospitality enterprises, in which a small staffing base and financial limitations typically force employees to occupy two or more roles during a single shift. Activities can be, among other things, customer service, food preparation, cleaning, stock management and administrative but often on acute time limits. This work acuity is bound to increase physical and mental workloads especially when the trading is at its peak like evenings, weekends, and seasonal surges.

The relatively large proportion of neutral answers can also suggest that the exposure to the workload across the job roles and shifts can be variable. Indicatively, supervisory personnel or relatives may find the workload bearing more of cognitive and emotional orientation, including the demand in decision-making and interpersonal aspects, than enduring physical labour. However, the general trend is overwhelming in favour of workload pressure as a major cause of fatigue in the sample.

Collectively these results highlight the significance of workload management as one of the key intervention points of organisations. As possible strategies to alleviate fatigue and enable employee wellbeing in family-owned hospitality business, realistic task allocation, satisfactory levels of staffing and structured schedules could prove important.

4.5 Recovery Difficulties and Work Scheduling

Question 12 was used to measure recovery after work-related fatigue because it investigated the perception of the employees regarding whether their work schedules

made getting sufficient time between shifts a challenge. Effective recovery is also of great importance in ensuring that the fatigue is not accumulated because it gives a chance to rest physical, cognitive and emotional resources. In the field of hospitality work, when job stress is usually extreme and sustained, a lack of recovery may result in chronic fatigue and more lasting wellbeing problems.

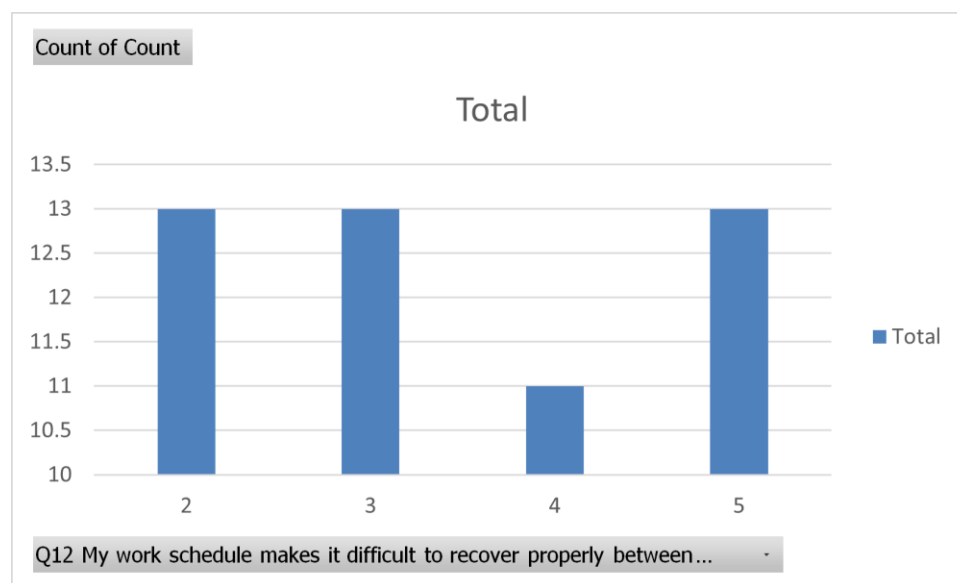


Figure 4.3 is a tabular presentation of the distribution of responses to Q12

The findings show a wide spread of the answers, with the lowest of 2 (Disagree), to the highest of 5 (Strongly Agree). The overall frequency of agreement responses (4 and 5), however, shows that a significant percentage of the respondents have trouble with utilising sufficient time to recover between shifts. This trend indicates that the current scheduling behaviours can result in the lack of rest and sleep as well as mental disconnection with work. Patterns of common scheduling of hospitality business like late-night closures and early-morning shifts are likely to be the cause of this problem.

The occurrence of neutral and disagreement answers indicates that there is a difference in timing of scheduling in various business, work setting and personal situations. Employees could do with more predictable or flexible schedules whereas others could have inconsistent schedules that interfere with the recovery. Family-owned hospitality businesses tend to have informal scheduling which may be forced by immediate

requirements of the business or even the availability of employees as opposed to formal rota scheduling. Although such flexibility might be required to ensure the continuity of the business, it might hamper recovery chances of the staff unintentionally.

Lack of recovery is of particular concern because of its close relationship with chronic fatigue which occurs when the demands are regularly beyond the recovery capacity. Long-term deterioration of physical health and cognitive functioning and emotional wellbeing, on the one hand, and burnout and disengagement, on the other, have been associated with chronic fatigue. Regarding the organisational level, chronic shortages in recovery can also be one of the factors leading to poor performance and increased turnover intentions.

All in all, work scheduling and recovery provision are identified as the most important areas when it comes to fatigue management. Introducing foreseeable scheduling trends and providing a sufficient rest time between shifts can be an essential factor that allows to help diminish fatigue and facilitate sustainable work-related conditions in family-owned hospitality organisations.

4.6 Fatigue and Work Performance

Question 13 was used to test the perceived effect of fatigue on work performance. The purpose of understanding the consequences of performance is critical towards associating employee wellbeing with organisational performance.

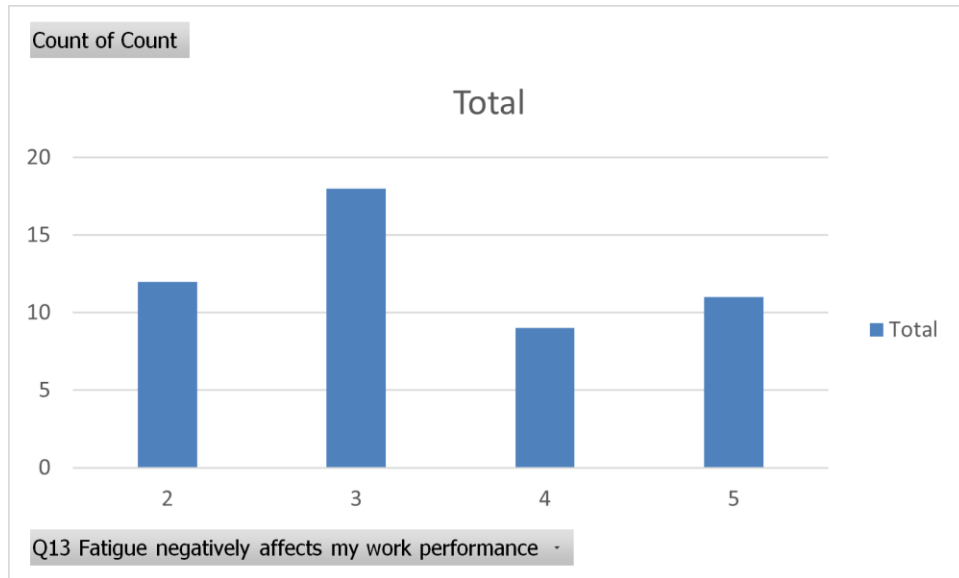


Figure 4.4 depicts the responses to Q13

The chart shows that there is a tendency to agree to it with high frequency of responses at 3 (Neutral) and 4 (Agree), and a significant amount of responses at 5 (Strongly Agree). This means that most workers are aware that there is a direct correlation between fatigue and poor performance.

Performance impairments can be in the form of slow speed of performing tasks, poor attention to detail, performance and poor quality of services. These effects are especially pronounced in the hospitality settings where customer satisfaction is greatly determined by the responsiveness of the staff and their interpersonal behaviour.

The results indicate that fatigue is no longer a personal health problem but an operational problem that has a direct impact on productivity and service delivery. In the case of small family-run enterprises, any slight changes in performance can disproportionately affect the performance because of the lack of manpower and dependence on the standards of consistent service delivery.

4.7 Emotional Wellbeing and Mood Impacts

The effect of emotional wellbeing was measured with the help of Question 14 which tested the idea that fatigue influenced the mood and emotional condition of respondents at work.

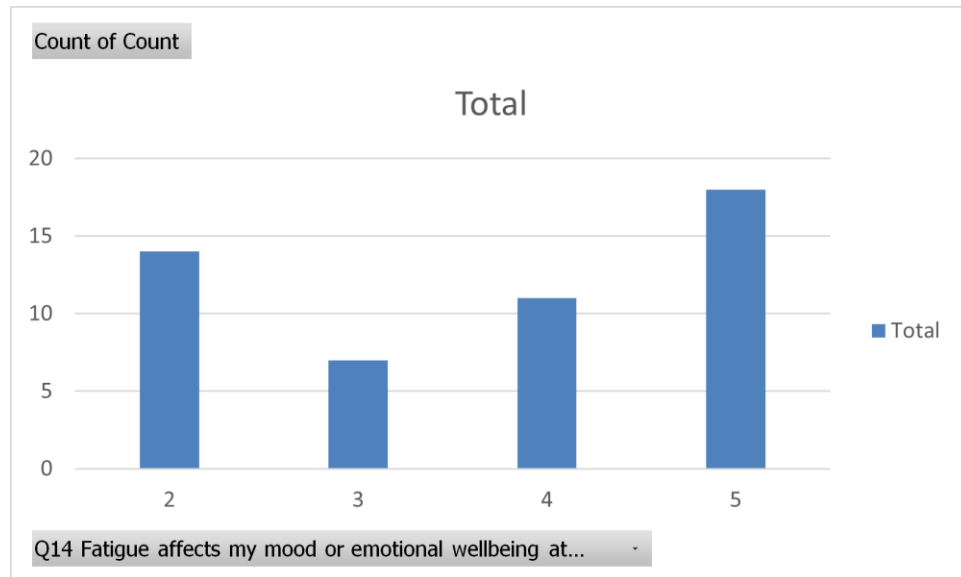


Figure 4.5: The answers to Q14 are shown

There is a strong skew to the right of the distribution with higher agreement levels with a particular focus on the higher end of the distribution (5). This is a pointer that fatigue causes emotional impacts that are not only common but also highly experienced by respondents. Emotional strain can also encompass irritability, lack of patience to customers and lack of motivation.

Such results are especially applicable to the area of hospitality work that demands emotional labour over time. Fatigue can affect the ability of employees to control emotions, and burnout and emotional exhaustion risks may be high. Close interpersonal interactions and the overlap between work and personal life may add to emotional strain in the family-owned environment.

4.8 Normalisation of Fatigue in Hospitality Work

Question 15 evaluated the perceptions of respondents towards fatigue as being either routine or normal in the process of working in the hospitality sector.

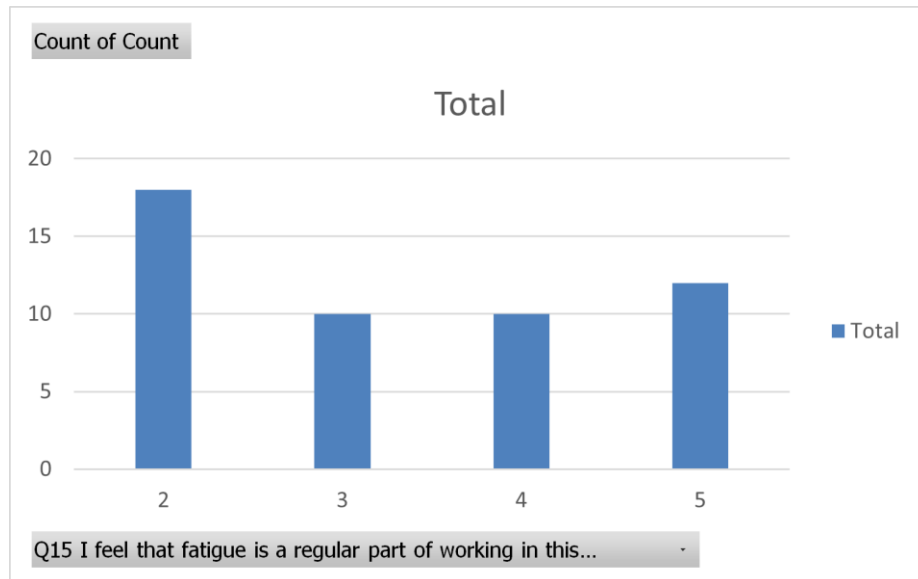
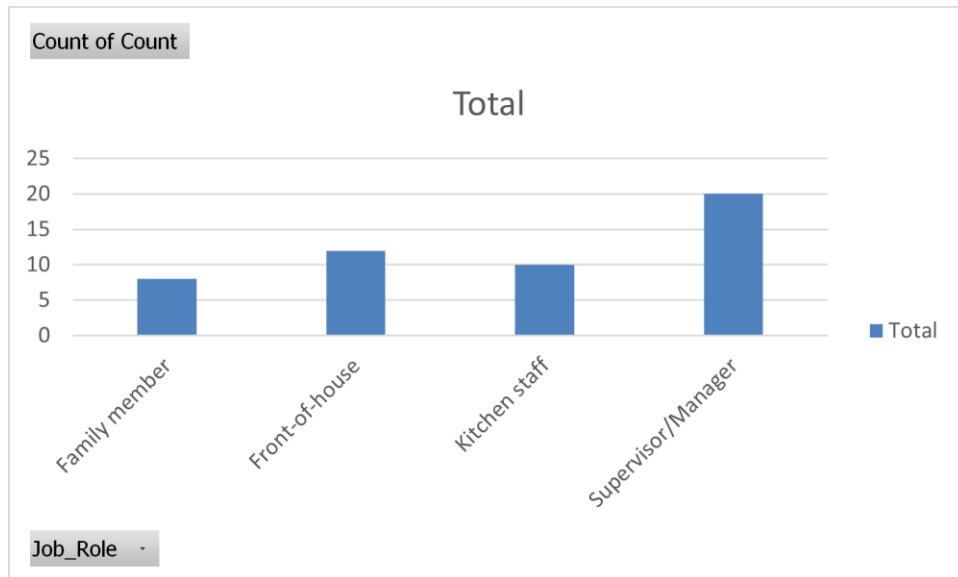
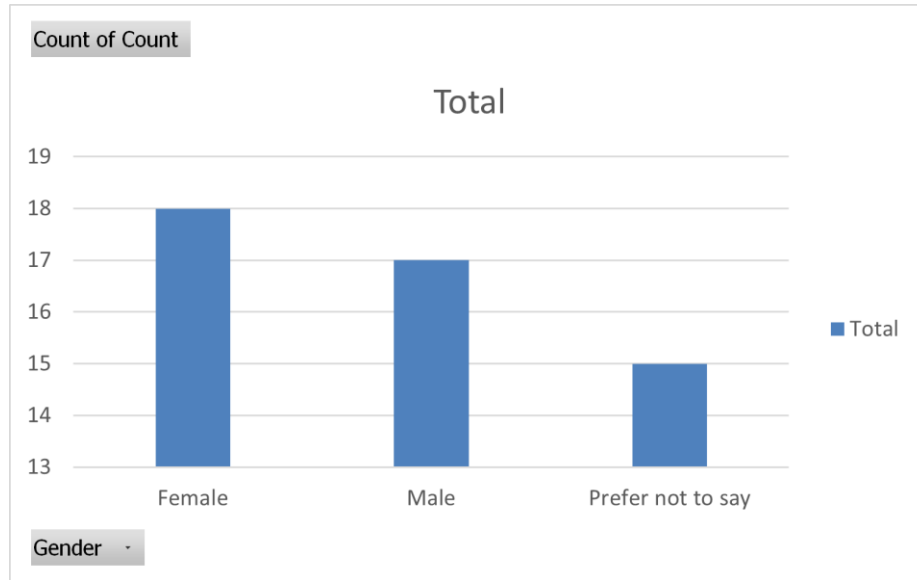


Figure 4.6: The results indicate the distribution of answers to Q15

The findings show a lot of consensus, with the most prevalent frequency of "2" (Disagree) and "5" (Strongly Agree), the views are polarised. Nevertheless, the significant rate of agreement answers indicates that a good number of employees have made fatigue a normal part of a hospitality job.

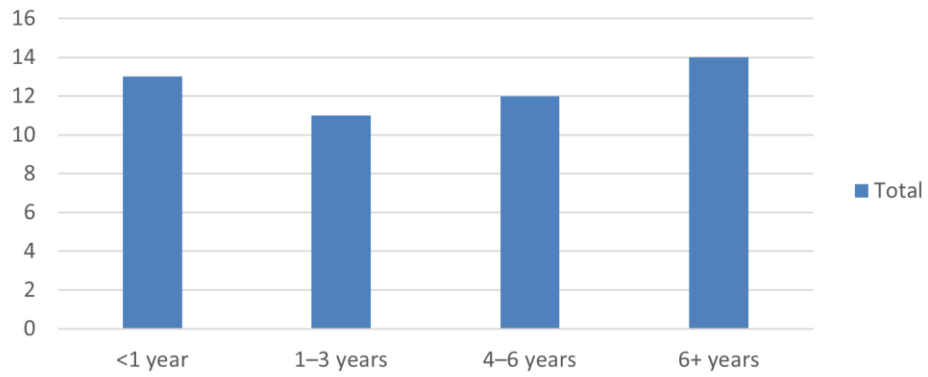
This is a worrying normalisation that is likely to diminish the chances of fatigue being viewed as an organisation-manageable problem. Employees might be less willing to be supported when they perceive the fatigue as unavoidable and managers might be less willing to take proactive measures.

There are some other charts based on the survey result which will be provided below. These will help increase the depth of the conducted study.



Count of Count

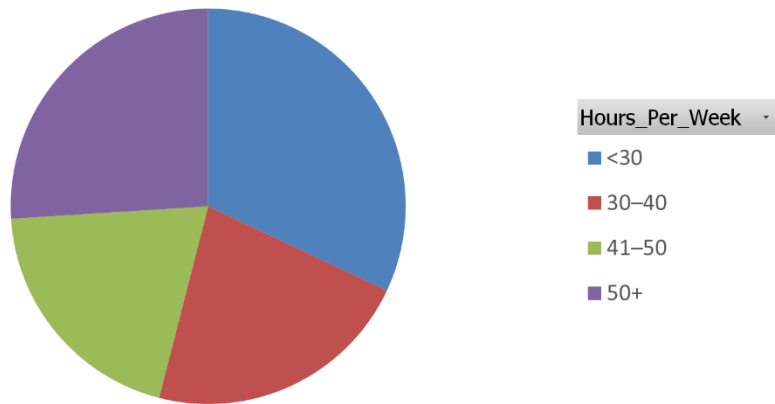
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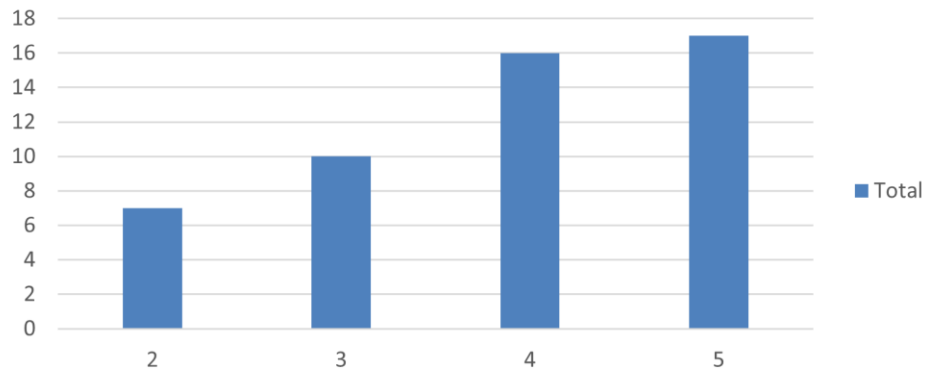
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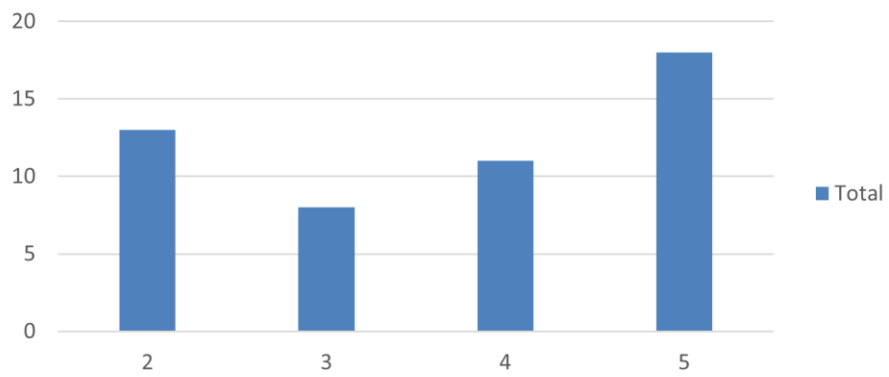
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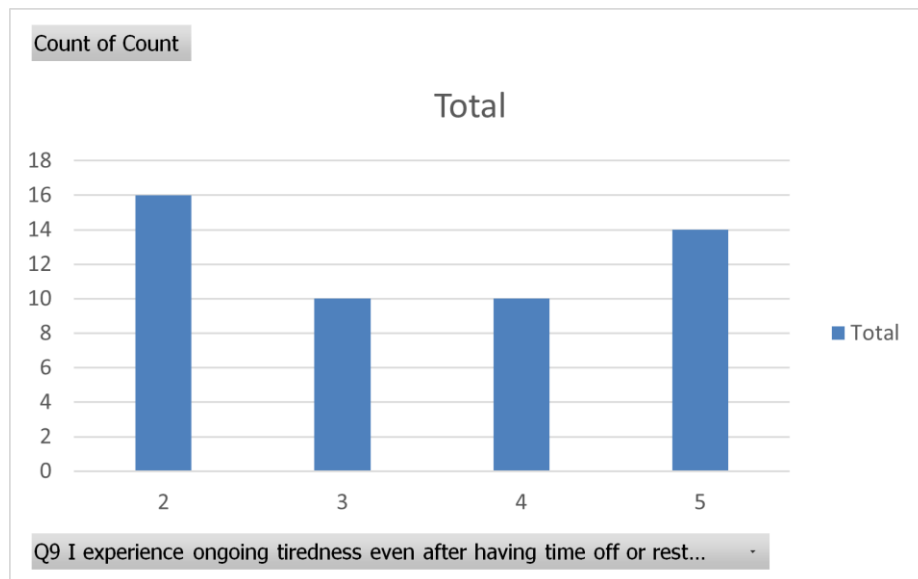
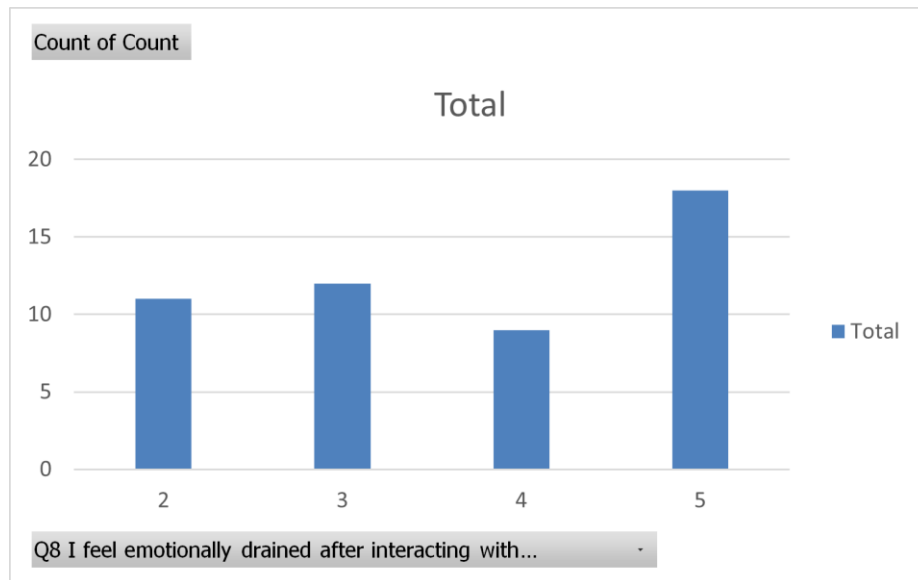
Q6 I feel physically exhausted after completing my work...

Count of Count

Total



Q7 I feel mentally tired or find it difficult to concentrate during...



4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reported the quantitative results of the research such as the prevalence of the phenomenon and the perceived consequences of the problem of workplace fatigue among the employees in hospitality businesses in London which are owned by families. The findings show that the state of cognitive fatigue, workload pressure, recovery problems, performance depreciation and emotional strain are widely experienced in the sample. Fatigue is commonly understood as a normal phenomenon in hospitality work and this could be a barrier to appropriate management action.

These results can be seen as a solid empirical evidence of the topicality of the Job Demands-Resources framework and emphasise the significance of specific fatigue mitigation measures. The following chapter combines qualitative results to enhance an insight on managerial attitudes and organisational behaviours driving these experiences.

Chapter 5: Qualitative Findings

5.1 Introduction to Qualitative Findings

The chapter contains the qualitative data of semi-structured interviews with owners and managers of family-owned hospitality businesses in London. This chapter is intended to give a detailed insight on the way fatigue in the workplace is perceived, experienced and handled in the managerial view of the issue. Although the quantitative results in Chapter 4 underscored the occurrence and effects of fatigue in employees, the qualitative data provides contextual information on the organisational practices, limitations and cultural processes that influence such experiences.

Thematic analysis was used in the analysis of the qualitative data which enabled the identification of recurring patterns and meanings in the accounts of the participants. The analysis process was inductive but sensitised by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model which allowed pursuing the interaction of job demands, job resources and organisational context in order to affect fatigue. Interpretation and analysis of interview data involved repeated reading, coding and grouping of the data and themes were formulated.

The analysis revealed five themes that were overarching, namely (1) the workload intensity and role multiplicity, (2) informal scheduling and recovery issues, (3) emotional labour and customer expectation, (4) normalisation of fatigue in family businesses, and (5) the limitations and possibilities to manage fatigue. All these themes help to obtain a subtle perspective of fatigue in family-run hospitality businesses and supplement the quantitative results with a reason as to why fatigue exists and how it is being managed at the moment.

5.2 Workload Intensity and Role Multiplicity

One of the overarching themes that appeared through the qualitative interviews was the workload and how it is overbearing and how employees are expected to do more than

one job at a time with family-owned hospitality ventures. The managers and owners always spoke about operational contexts that were formed by the small number of staff, the lack of predictability of customer demand, and constant cost pressures. Consequently, employees were often asked to fill the gaps wherever necessary and especially at busy times like weekends, evenings and seasonal upsurges. This flexibility was generally considered as a source of service continuity but was also known as a great strain factor.

The workers stated that employees often had a vast amount of work to do during one shift and some of those duties encompassed customer service, food preparation, cleaning, stock management and sometimes even administration. Managers had to admit that such role multiplicity has risen physical and mental loads since employees will have to quickly alternate tasks and provide service. These demands, coupled with time pressure and high customer expectations, were seen to play a significant role in making the customer experience exhaustion and overload.

This theme is very much related to the job demands element of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model that indicates that an ongoing workload, role overload and task fragmentation drain the employees of their energy resources and leads to a higher risk of fatigue. Most of the managers were not unaware of this connection and they stated clearly that an increase in workloads correlates with fatigue and the general lack of resilience in the employees. These impressions are very similar to the quantitative results of Chapter 4, in which workload was strongly linked to fatigue development by the employees. Nevertheless, in spite of this awareness, the workload intensity was often reported by the participants as a very strong inevitability, referring to the labour shortages, increasing costs of operations, and the financial fragility of small companies as the main limiting factors.

Relatives who employed family within the business have frequently been referred to as taking on even greater work loads than other employees who were not family members. This was normally blamed on high sense of responsibility, emotional attachment to the business and dedication to the survival of the business in the long run. Although this dedication was seen positively by the managers, they also recognized its negative effects.

Some of the participants were also worried that the long-term overworking of family members elevated the chances of burnout and fatigue in the long run especially when the family had to operate in high demand over an extended period of time. All in all, this theme shows that the intensity of work and the multiplicity of roles are regarded as the primary contributors to fatigue in family-owned hospitality enterprises and realistic workload distribution and supportive management strategies are necessary.

5.3 Informal Scheduling and Recovery Challenges

The next notable theme that comes out of the qualitative interviews is the informal scheduling practices and the complications of the same to the recovery of the employees. It was also reported by many owners and managers that the allocation of shifts was based more on the availability of staff, urgent operation needs and short term adjustments instead of formalised rota system. Although the strategy was flexible and responsive to changing demand, it commonly led to inconsistent working hours, late-night shifts, and lack of rest between shifts.

The participants confirmed that time had to be spent on recovery as time constraints were mostly encountered, especially during weekends, holidays, and season peaks. Some of the managers mentioned instances where the employees had to work the long shifts after one another because of shortages of staff, illness absence, or unforeseen spikes in customer demand. Even though managers noted that they are mindful of staff exhaustion and care about the wellbeing of the staff, they also indicated that it is hard to strike a balance between the need to rest and the reality of managing a small hospitality company. Money constraints and the absence of sufficient staffing opportunities were usually quoted as the obstacles to offering regular rest intervals.

This theme is closely aligned with the quantitative results of Chapter 4, in which a significant percentage of the employees indicated experiencing the problem with the difficulty of recovering sufficiently between the shifts. Managers acknowledged that lack of recovery was a contributor to accumulating fatigue with time, but most of them acknowledged that they did not have any structure systems or formal policies on which

to use to solve this problem. Rather, recovery was usually handled on an ad hoc basis which relied on immediate situations and not long-term planning.

The situation of family owning business also added to difficulties of recovery. Owners often stated that they were always available, and they had little to no room to disconnect their mind to the work related issues. Working in the family business together, it was especially hard to keep the business and personal life in separate and independent terms which led to long time exposure to working pressure and lack of psychological rejuvenation. Such crossing of boundaries tended to increase fatigue even at nominal rest times.

Job resources that could buffer high job demands are missing since the lack of systematic scheduling and recovery provisions can be viewed through the prism of Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) perspective. Flexibility was greatly accepted by both managers and employees but it was too unofficial and tended to derail the consistent recovery chances. With time, this asymmetry added the exposure to chronic fatigue, which means that the increased scheduling predictability and the planned support of the recovery are required in family-owned hospitality corporations.

5.4 Emotional Labour and Customer Expectations

The theme of emotional labour came out as a major factor in fatigue experiences development. Supervisors always emphasized the need to keep customer services positive, and the employees of hospitality should always remain courteous, tolerant, and sensitive to the customer, irrespective of their own emotional conditions. This was projected to be especially demanding in peak seasons or working with hard nuts customers.

Participants admitted that emotional regulation imposes a significant task on the staff, particularly in cases when employees are already physically exhausted. Managers observed that emotional strain did not manifest clearly as compared to physical fatigue but had the same effect. Other interviewees would say that they would see irritability,

withdrawal, or lack of enthusiasm in tired employees, especially when the employees had to deal with customers over a long period.

Emotional labour in family-owned businesses was usually enhanced by the need to preserve the reputation of the family and the relationships with the regular customer base. The employees were now viewed as the embodiment of the family brand, which put the pressure on them to deliver on the emotional level even when they were tired. This brought emotional stress that was identified by the managers to cause fatigue but it was never openly talked about.

This theme supplements the quantitative results in the emotional wellbeing, where fatigue had close connections to mood and emotional strain. Emotional labour is an important job demand in JD-R perspective, which consumes emotional resources. Emotional exhaustion can build up when there is no support, taking a break, or a rest period, which puts a person at risk of burnout.

5.5 Normalisation of Fatigue in Family-Owned Hospitality Businesses

One of the most impressive themes of interviews was the normalisation of fatigue in family-owned hospitality business. Most managers said fatigue was a part of the job or an expected reality in the work in hospitality. This was the perception of both the owners and the employees especially when the season was busy.

They had respondents who indicated that long working hours and fatigue were usually considered as signs of dedication and hard work particularly among relatives. Although the culture led to resiliency and commitment, it also discouraged the recognition of fatigue as an issue that needed to be addressed. Some managers confessed that the issue of fatigue was not much raised unless it led to apparent performance complications or absenteeism.

This normalisation is consistent with the quantitative fact which states that fatigue is a normal experience by most employees at work. In cases where fatigue is perceived as an unavoidable situation, employees and managers might be less willing to support one another and this can escalate into long-lasting exhaustion.

Through a JD-R approach, normalisation of fatigue portrays an imbalance between high job demands within the culture that are not accompanied by an investment in job resources. On one hand, family loyalty and common commitment would be regarded as informal resources, but, on the other hand, it can hide the dangers of fatigue by promoting self-sacrifice.

This theme brings out a vital cultural stumbling block to proper fatigue management and also brings out the necessity of awareness and rebranding fatigue as a controllable organisational problem instead of an inevitable state.

5.6 Constraints and Opportunities for Fatigue Management

The last theme was concerned with the fatigue management practices emphasizing the limitations and the opportunities being available in family-owned hospitality businesses. Financial constraints, shortages of staff and operational pressures have always been mentioned by managers as reasons why formal fatigue management systems cannot be introduced. A number of the participants believed that structured interventions applied in large organisations were not realistic in the small businesses.

Notwithstanding those limitations, some of the managers have reported informal measures that are already in place, including taking a short break when feasible, motivating employees to switch shifts and open relativity regarding fatigue. Although these practices were considered to help, they were reactive, in most cases, but not proactive.

Notably, the respondents were receptive to cost-effective and pragmatic interventions such as schedule predictability, rudimentary training in fatigue awareness, and better communication on wellbeing. Other managers realised that fatigue could be minimised

by making even minuscule modifications like making sure that there is some rest between shifts.

This theme corresponds to the job resources route of the JD-R model which stresses the opportunities to counteract the job demands with the help of supportive management practices. The results indicate that resource limitations exist, but they can be offset with successful changes in fatigue management, provided that the strategies based on context-specific approaches are applied in relation to family-owned hospitality companies.

5.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter has outlined the qualitative results of the research project, which has also provided a detailed analysis of the managerial perceptions and organisational performance concerning workplace fatigue among the family-owned hospitality companies in London. The results show that fatigue is conditioned by heavy workload, irregular working schedules, emotional labour and culture that permits exhaustion. Although managers are aware of fatigue and its effects, proactive management is usually constrained by structural and cultural factors.

Notably, the qualitative results can be used to supplement the quantitative ones to explain the prevalence of fatigue and the impact of organisational environment on the experiences of employees. Combined, these findings indicate the necessity of cost-effective, workable fatigue management techniques that do not ignore the reality of family-owned hospitality businesses. These findings are incorporated in the following chapter to create evidence-based conclusions and recommendations.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter closes the research by summarising the quantitative and qualitative results to respond to the research aim and objectives and has a critical reflection of the study implications of workplace fatigue in family-owned hospitality businesses in London. The chapter combines both empirical data and theoretical knowledge especially the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model to present a logical explanation of the causes, effects and how fatigue can be managed in this organisational setting.

This paper set out to investigate the major causes of fatigue at the workplace, its affect on the employees welfare and performance and the current or proposed strategies to address fatigue within family-owned hospitality businesses. The results prove that fatigue is a complex and enduring problem that is determined by the work load intensity, informal scheduling practices, emotional labour, and culture normalisation of fatigue. Notably, managers may be aware of fatigue as an issue, but the structural and resource nature is usually restrictive of proactive intervention.

The chapter is organised in the following way. It starts by providing an overview of some of the major findings that are directly connected with the aim of the research. Second, it talks about the theoretical implication of the research as far as the JD-R model and the available literature are concerned. It provides practical and managerial implications of family-owned hospitality businesses. Fourth, evidence-based recommendations are suggested. Lastly, the chapter takes into account constraints of the research and provides research direction in the future, concluding the dissertation

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The results of the current research indicate that work burnout is very common, and it has profound roots in family-based hospitality companies. To answer Research Objective 1, the research established a number of interconnected psychological and organisational

factors that cause fatigue. The quantitative data revealed that there were high levels of cognitive fatigue, workload-related exhaustion, and inadequate intershifts relaxation. These results were supported by qualitative information, where managers outlined environments that were characterised by labour shortages, role multiplicity, informal schedule, and working long hours.

As far as Research Objective 2 is concerned, the study has revealed a clear correlation between fatigue, employee wellbeing, and performance. The results of the survey revealed that fatigue has undesirable effects on concentration, alertness, mood, and perceived performance. The qualitative results also helped to explain the manifestations of fatigue in irritability, lack of motivation, and decreased service quality. These effects are especially important in the hospitality environment, where the performance is highly connected to the customer experience.

On the Research Objective 3, the research examined managerial perceptions and available fatigue management practices. Although managers acknowledged the problem of fatigue, most of them did not consider it as something that was preventable in hospitality work. Fatigue was at times normalised especially among the family members whereby, long hours were equated with dedication and duty. Management strategies employed were mostly informal and reactionary as they were based on short breaks, swapping of shifts or ad hoc flexibility compared to planned interventions.

Lastly, when dealing with Research Objective 4 the study found the fatigue mitigation opportunities. In spite of constraints in financial and staffing levels, both quantitative and qualitative results indicate that interventions are low in cost and context sensitive, including predictable scheduling, workload awareness, and open communication, may have a significant impact on fatigue reduction. In general, the results show that a continuous imbalance in high job demands and limited job resources exists in family-based businesses in the hospitality sector.

6.3 Integration with the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Model

The JD-R Model is an invaluable theoretical framework that can be used to explain the results of the present study. The JD-R model suggests that task workloads and job demands in the workplace with a lack of job resources contribute to the energy loss, fatigue, and eventual burnout. The theoretical suggestion is firmly supported by the empirical evidence of the given research.

The fact of high job demands was apparent in both sets of data. Quantitative data were used to show that physical exhaustion, mental fatigue, and emotional distractions are common among the employees. According to the qualitative interviews, the drivers of these demands are workload intensity, role multiplicity, emotional labour and the irregular schedules. These demands are usually magnified by staffing constraints and financial strains in the family-owned hospitality businesses, which results in long-term energy drains.

Job resources on the other hand were identified to be non-existent or intermittently available. Though various sources of information were informal, including supportive relationships, flexibility, and family commitment, they could not provide sufficient buffering when under high demands. The inadequacy of the organisational resources is manifested in the absence of organised scheduling, professional recovery arrangements, and mechanisms of fatigue awareness. Notably, the researchers discovered that cultural aspects including fatigue normalisation process also undermined buffering effectiveness of available resources.

The health impairment pathway of the JD-R model can be seen especially in this context, which is that over time due to ongoing demand and insufficient recovery leads to chronic fatigue and poor wellbeing. Meanwhile, the motivational pathway seems to be limited because fatigue compromises engagement, emotional regulation, and performance. The results indicate that family loyalty and shared commitment might temporarily promote motivation but they might also conceal the risks of fatigue and postpone intervention. In general, the research paper has expanded the use of the JD-R model to the small, family-owned hospitality organisation and proved that the framework is not restricted to large

organisations only, but it is important to focus on organisational size, ownership system and cultural factors when implementing the model.

6.4 Practical and Managerial Implications

This research has strong applied meanings on the owners and the managers of family owned hospitality companies. To begin with, fatigue is common among most people implying that it is a strategic organisational issue and not an individual one. The implication of fatigue on service quality, customer satisfaction, employee retention and long-term business sustainability is clear.

Second, fatigue has become a normal aspect of management that poses a serious issue. When exhaustion is perceived as a job aspect, the prevention and early intervention are not realised. Managers can thus contribute towards a very significant role of re-framing fatigue as manageable and legitimate making people free discussing tiredness and rest requirements without feeling stigmatized.

Third, the dependence on the use of informal scheduling and responsive management is indicative of the necessity of increased structure, even in resource-constrained settings. Although small family businesses might not be able to afford the implementation of formal fatigue risk management systems, even minor adjustments in the scheduling predictability and planning of the workloads could be very helpful in improving the avenues of recovery.

Fourth, emotional labour turned out to be one of the major yet frequently ignored causes of fatigue. Managers ought to appreciate that customer-facing requirements impose emotional exhaustion on employees besides the physical and mental pressures. Emotional support, emotional effort recognition, and finding time to have a few hours off after emotional interactions can help reduce emotional exhaustion.

Lastly, the results indicate that family involvement, as a strength factor, can also be a risk factor that predisposes fatigue. The owners and family members must be advised to be good examples of proper working habits, such as taking breaks and disengaging oneself

when possible so that they can have sustainable guidelines that can be adopted by the rest of the workforce.

6.5 Recommendations for Fatigue Mitigation

These are the evidence-based recommendations based on the results of this study. The recommendations are aimed at being practical, low cost and context specific, and damaging the limitation that family owned hospitality businesses have.

Recommendation 1: Introduce Predictable and Transparent Scheduling

Managers need to have higher predictability in terms of scheduling shift including giving of notice over rotas and reducing the number of last minute shifts. Even small advances in planning visibility can help in recovery as employees can be able to plan rest, sleep and commitments.

Recommendation 2: Monitor and Manage Workload Intensity

The workload distribution must be regularly checked by the owners and managers especially at the peak times. Easy interventions like prioritisation of tasks, cycling of demanding tasks and excessive role overlap can be minimised without adding to the staffing expenses.

Recommendation 3: Promote Recovery and Rest Awareness

Simple fatigue awareness training must be initiated to emphasise on the need to rest, sleep and recover. This may involve informal meetings, postings or brief team meetings, which would assist employees and managers to identify the early signs of fatigue.

Recommendation 4: Encourage Open Communication About Fatigue

The managers are expected to create a culture that makes employees feel free to talk about tiredness without being judged. Routine check-up and communication can assist in recognizing threats of fatigue in time and make necessary corrections.

Recommendation 5: Address Emotional Labour Explicitly

Since hospitality work requires a lot of emotion, managers ought to recognize emotional effort as an element of the job. Emotional exhaustion can be minimised by allowing short decompression breaks and providing emotional support following the difficult customer interactions.

Recommendation 6: Lead by Example Within Family Businesses

Workers, especially family owners need to be good role models by exhibiting healthy working habits such as taking of breaks and adhering to time of relaxation. This creates attainable expectations and minimises normalisation of overwork in the business.

6.6 Limitations of the Study

Although it is a very insightful study, there are a number of limitations that cannot be ignored. To begin with, the number of survey respondents (50) and a small number of interviewees limit the applicability of the results. Its findings are not representative of the whole hospitality industry.

Second, only the family-owned businesses of the hospitality industry in London were targeted in the research, so other areas, or business organisational settings, might not be applicable. In rural regions or larger businesses structural pressures might vary.

Third, the application of self-reported data presents the risk of a response bias, such as social desirability and fatigue normalisation. In spite of these weaknesses, the mixed-methodology increased the credibility because of triangulation.

6.7 Directions for Future Research

Further investigation may elaborate on this study by adding more participants and more different kinds of hospitality enterprises into the sample along with the comparison of fatigue between family and non-family-owned business. Longitudinal ones would be of specific use in studying the development of fatigue and the impact of interventions on the results. More studies may also be conducted to determine the contribution of gender, age, and cultural background to the fatigue experience in the hospitality work.

6.8 Chapter Conclusion

The chapter has culminated the dissertation through unifying the findings of the study and offering practical suggestions towards the management of fatigue in the workplace in the family-owned hospitality businesses. The study confirms that fatigue is a multidimensional, complicated problem conditioned by the increased workload, the lack of resources, and cultural conventions permitting exhaustion. Fatigue needs to be addressed both through awareness and through action even in environments that are limited in resources. The family-owned hospitality businesses can also encourage sustainable working practices and organisational resilience in the long term by implementing context-sensitive approaches that lead to improved recovery, workload management, and wellbeing.

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Appendix

Section A: Demographic Information (5 questions)

What is your age group?

- ☐ Under 20
- ☐ 20–29
- ☐ 30–39
- ☐ 40–49
- ☐ 50 and above

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your job role?

- ☐ Front-of-house staff
- ☐ Kitchen staff
- ☐ Supervisor/Manager
- ☐ Family member involved in business

How long have you worked in this business?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1–3 years
- ☐ 4–6 years
- ☐ More than 6 years

How many hours do you usually work per week?

- ☐ Less than 30 hours
- ☐ 30–40 hours
- ☐ 41–50 hours
- ☐ More than 50 hours

Section B: Job Demands & Fatigue (Likert Scale) (10 questions)

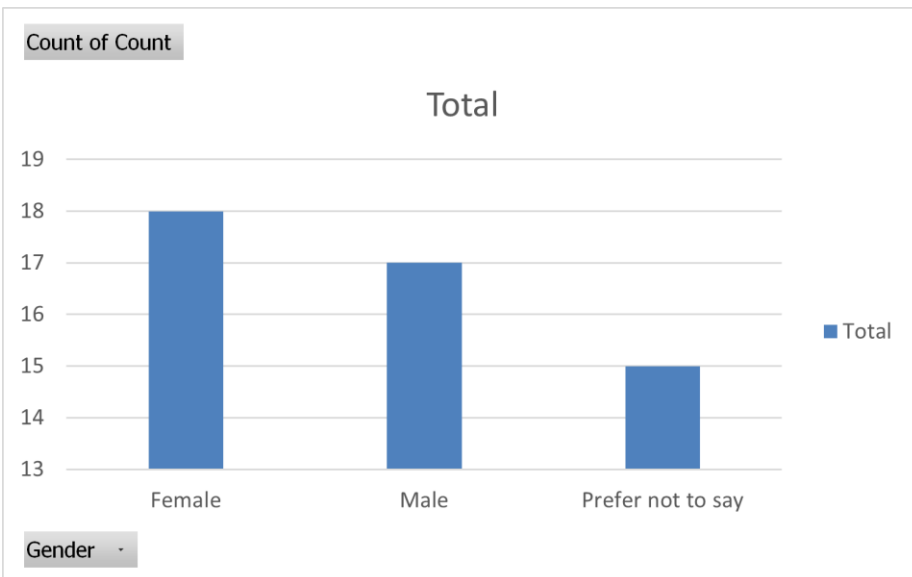
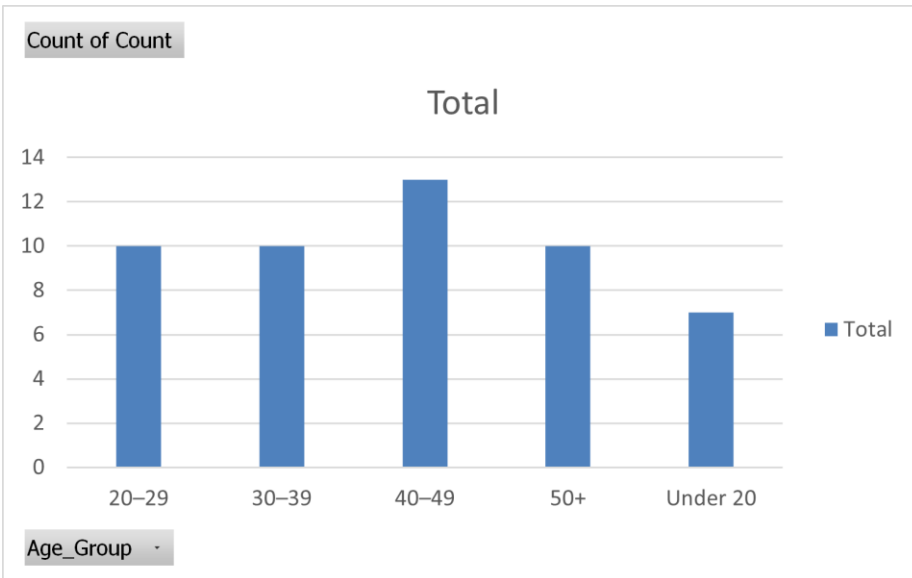
Response scale for Questions 6–15:

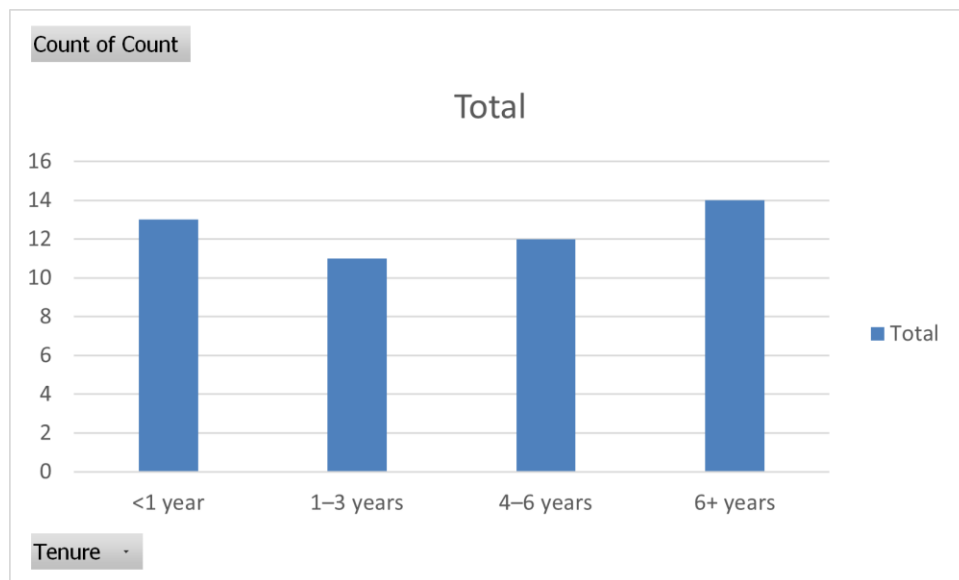
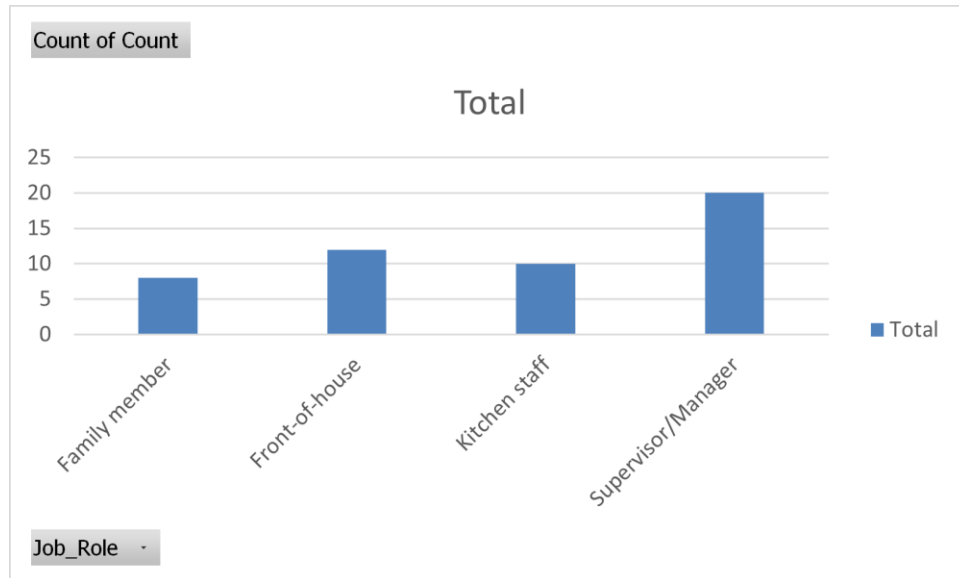
1 = Strongly Disagree | 2 = Disagree | 3 = Neutral | 4 = Agree | 5 = Strongly Agree

- I regularly work long or physically demanding shifts.
- My job requires sustained mental concentration.

- I feel emotionally drained after dealing with customers.
- My work schedule is unpredictable or frequently changes.
- I feel physically exhausted after completing my work shifts.
- I feel mentally tired during my working hours.
- I experience ongoing tiredness even after rest days.
- I struggle to stay alert or feel sleepy while at work.
- I have enough time between shifts to recover properly.
- Fatigue negatively affects my work performance.

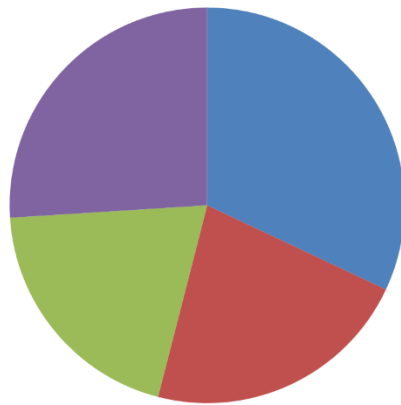
Charts





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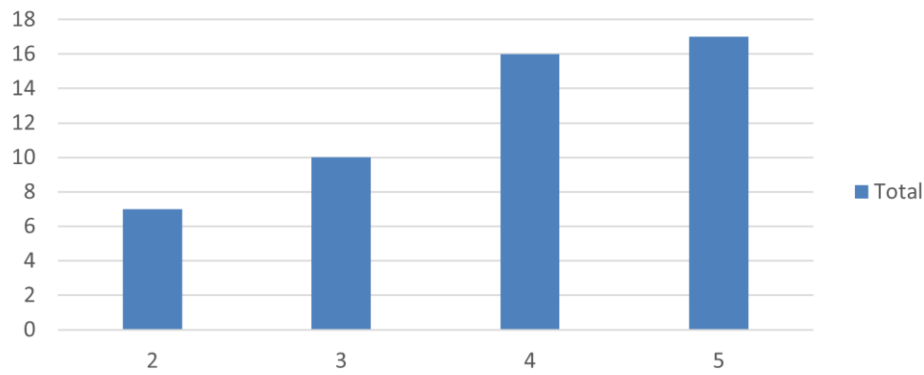


Hours_Per_Week

- <30
- 30-40
- 41-50
- 50+

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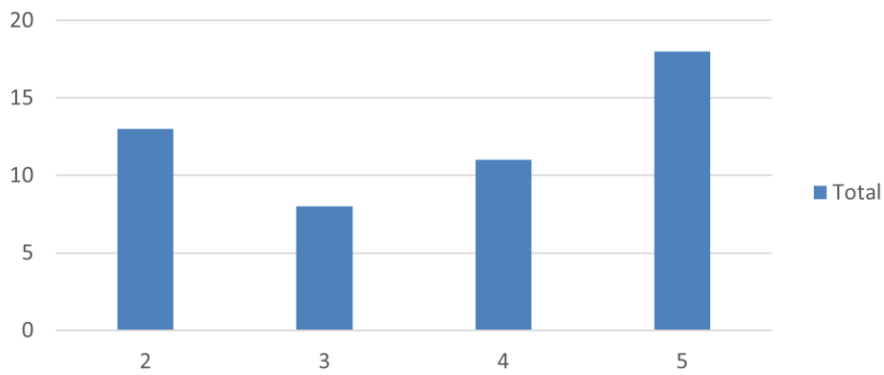
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Q6 I feel physically exhausted after completing my work...

Count of Count

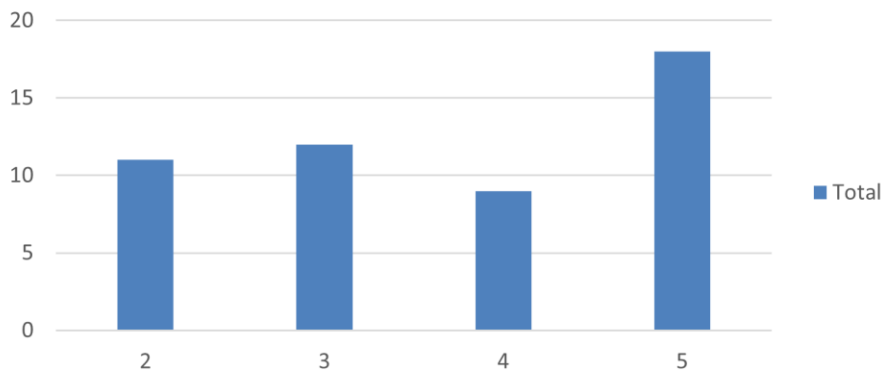
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Q7 I feel mentally tired or find it difficult to concentrate during... ▾

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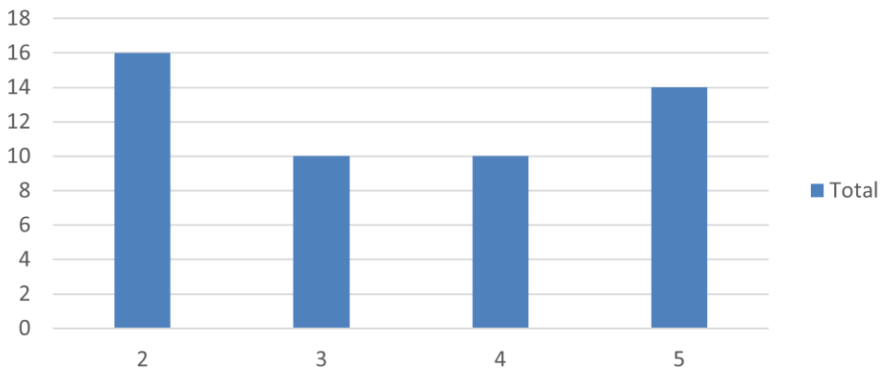
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Q8 I feel emotionally drained after interacting with... ▾

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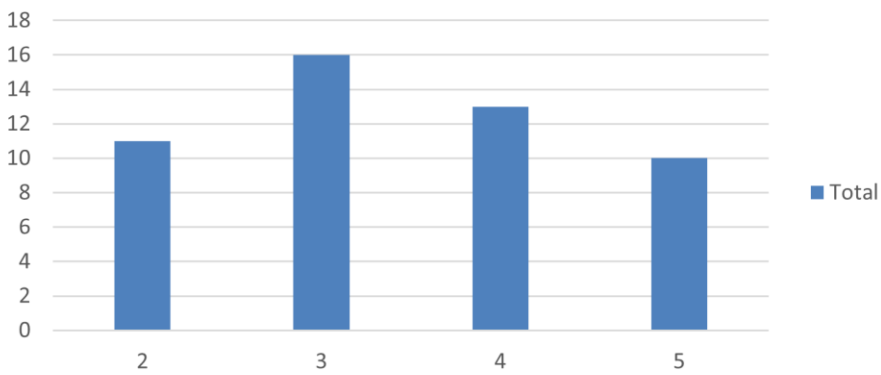
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Q9 I experience ongoing tiredness even after having time off or rest... -

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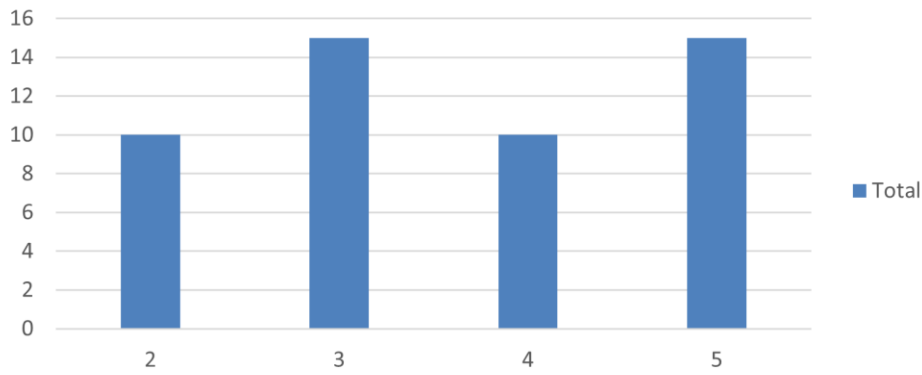
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Q10 I struggle to stay alert or feel sleepy while... -

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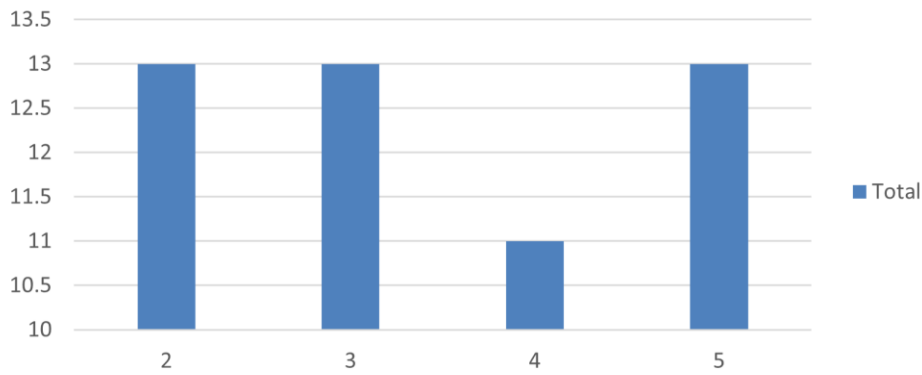
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Q11 My workload contributes significantly to my level of... -

Count of Count

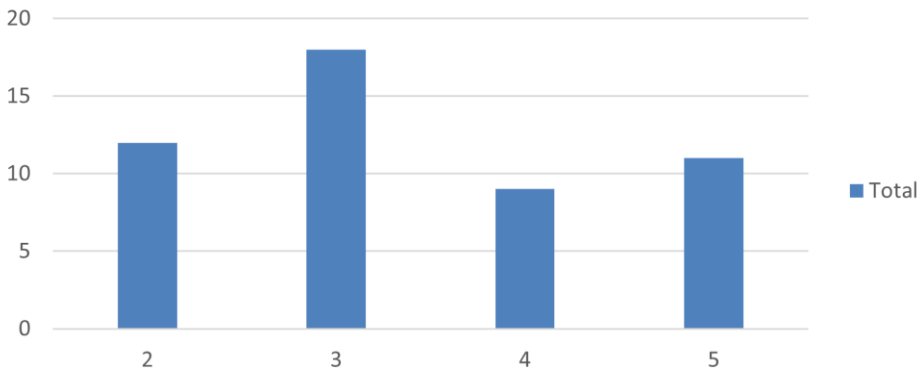
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Q12 My work schedule makes it difficult to recover properly between... -

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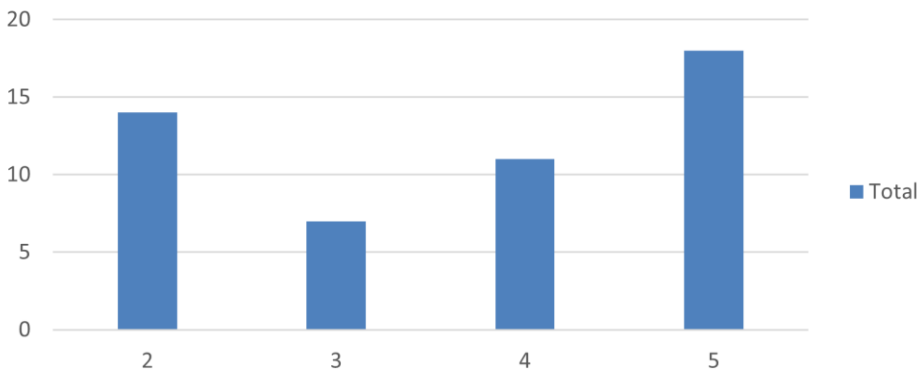
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Q13 Fatigue negatively affects my work performance -

Count of Count

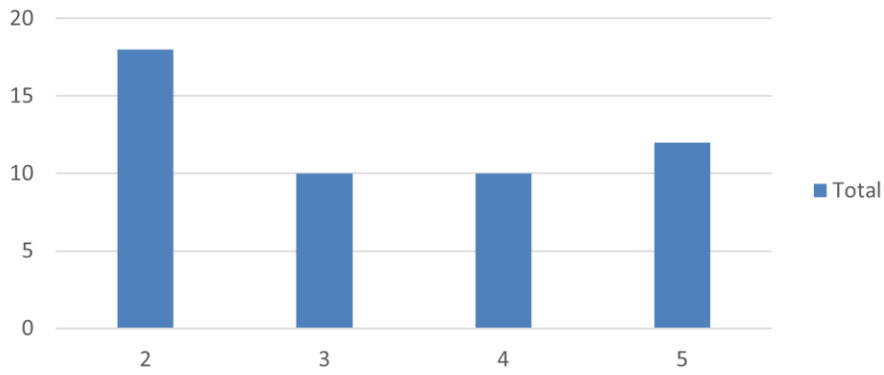
Total



Q14 Fatigue affects my mood or emotional wellbeing at...

Count of Count

Total



Q15 I feel that fatigue is a regular part of working in this...