

# **The influence of irregular shifts on stress levels and the human psyche**

---

Bachelor Thesis for Obtaining the Degree

Bachelor of Business Administration in

Tourism, Hotel Management and Operations

Submitted to Eva Aileen Jungwirth- Edelman, MA

Theresa Messerer

1511025

Vienna, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2019

## Affidavit

I hereby affirm that this Bachelor's Thesis represents my own written work and that I have used no sources and aids other than those indicated. All passages quoted from publications or paraphrased from these sources are properly cited and attributed.

The thesis was not submitted in the same or in a substantially similar version, not even partially, to another examination board and was not published elsewhere.

31.5.2019

---

Date

---

Signature

## **Abstract**

**Topic:** The influence of shift work on stress levels and the human psyche

**Name of Author:** Theresa Messerer

**Course/ Year:** Bachelor of Business Administrations in Tourism, Hotel Management and Operations, 2019

**Pages:** 79

**Content:** Currently, limited research is available on the influences of irregular shifts on hotel employee's stress levels and the mental health state. However, mental health issues in the hotel industry, such as depression, anxiety or Burnout are increasingly rapidly. Thus, it is becoming more important for hotels to offer coping strategies or trainings regarding the impact of stress or mental health issues.

Therefore, the aim of this study was to research the influences of irregular shifts on stress levels and the mental health state of hotel employees and if human resource managers in Viennese hotels provide coping strategies and trainings to help affected employees dealing with stress and mental health problems.

The study used a mixed method approach, more precisely a survey among hotel employees was distributed and two interviews with human resource managers have been conducted. Also, a detailed literature reviews has been done to define the various mental disorders.

The findings of this research show the several impacts of irregular working hours on hotel employees. Moreover, the results emphasize the importance of promoting a good mental health at the workplace. Lastly, through the conducted interviews the researcher was able to identify some coping strategies and trainings implemented by Viennese hotels to help their employees dealing with stress or mental health issues.

**Supervisor:** Eva Aileen Jungwirth-Edelmann, MA

## Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES .....	6
LIST OF FIGURES.....	6
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	7
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	8
<b>1 INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1.1 MOTIVATION AND COGNITIVE INTEREST .....	9
1.2 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS: AIM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, HYPOTHESIS AND ITS LIMITATIONS.....	10
1.3 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS .....	12
<b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 MENTAL HEALTH.....	14
2.1.1 <i>Definition of Mental Health</i> .....	14
2.1.2 <i>Stress</i> .....	15
2.1.3 <i>Mental Health Issues</i> .....	17
2.2 COPING STRATEGIES FOR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES.....	24
2.2.1 <i>Problem Focused Strategies</i> .....	25
2.2.2 <i>Employee Assistance Programs</i> .....	26
2.2.3 <i>Personal Coping Strategies</i> .....	26
2.2.4 <i>Social Support</i> .....	27
2.2.5 <i>Work-Life Balance</i> .....	27
2.3 SHIFT WORK .....	29
2.3.1 <i>Definition of Shift Work</i> .....	30
2.3.2 <i>Types of Shift Work</i> .....	30
2.3.3 <i>Impact of Shift Work</i> .....	31
2.3.4 <i>Shift Work in the Hotel Industry</i> .....	38
2.4 STRESS AND MENTAL DISORDERS IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY.....	40
2.4.1 <i>Impact of Stress and Mental Disorders on a Hotel</i> .....	41
<b>3 METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>42</b>
3.1 AIM .....	42
3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.....	43
3.2.1 <i>Sampling Design</i> .....	44
3.3 UNIT OF ANALYSIS.....	46
3.3.1 <i>The Survey</i> .....	46

3.3.2	<i>The Interviews</i> .....	48
3.4	ETHICS .....	51
<b>4</b>	<b>EVALUATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE INTERVIEW/ SURVEY</b> .....	<b>52</b>
4.1	SURVEY PARTICIPANTS AND EVALUATION OF SURVEY .....	52
4.2	INTERVIEW PARTNERS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE INTERVIEWS.....	72
<b>5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>85</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b> .....	<b>88</b>
	<b>APPENDICES</b> .....	<b>99</b>

## List of Tables

TABLE 1: SURVEY PARTICIPANTS .....	53
TABLE 2: FREQUENCY OF DEPRESSION IN THE DEPARTMENTS.....	59
TABLE 3: FREQUENCY OF BIPOLAR I DISORDER IN THE DEPARTMENTS.....	61
TABLE 4: FREQUENCY OF GAD IN THE DEPARTMENTS.....	63
TABLE 5: FREQUENCY OF SOCIAL ANXIETY IN THE DEPARTMENTS.....	65
TABLE 6: FREQUENCY OF PANIC DISORDER IN THE DEPARTMENTS .....	68
TABLE 7: FREQUENCY OF BURNOUT IN THE DEPARTMENTS .....	70
TABLE 9: INTERVIEW PARTNERS.....	72

## List of Figures

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL MODEL.....	12
FIGURE 2: MAJOR DEPARTMENTS IN A 5* HOTEL .....	34
FIGURE 3: ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE F&B DEPARTMENT .....	37
FIGURE 4: SAMPLING TECHNIQUES.....	45
FIGURE 5: RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON WHETHER THEIR JOB IS STRESSFUL.....	54
FIGURE 6: RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON WHETHER THEY FEEL STRESSED .....	55
FIGURE 7: RESPONDENTS' OPINIONS ON WHETHER THEY HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH STRESS RELATED ISSUES.....	56
FIGURE 8: FREQUENCY OF EXPERIENCED SYMPTOMS DUE TO SHIFT WORK WITHIN THE VARIOUS DEPARTMENTS .....	57
FIGURE 9: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DEPRESSION AND SHIFT WORK.....	59
FIGURE 10: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DEPRESSION AND VARIATION OF SHIFTS.....	60
FIGURE 11: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BIPOLAR I DISORDER AND SHIFT WORK .....	62
FIGURE 12: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BIPOLAR I DISORDER AND VARIATION OF SHIFTS.....	62
FIGURE 13: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN GAD AND SHIFT WORK .....	64
FIGURE 14: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN GAD AND VARIATION OF SHIFTS .....	64
FIGURE 15: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SOCIAL ANXIETY AND SHIFT WORK.....	66
FIGURE 16: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SOCIAL ANXIETY AND VARIATION OF SHIFTS.....	67
FIGURE 17: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PANIC DISORDER AND SHIFT WORK .....	68
FIGURE 18: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN PANIC DISORDER AND VARIATION OF SHIFTS.....	69
FIGURE 19: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BURNOUT AND SHIFT WORK.....	70
FIGURE 20: ASSOCIATION BETWEEN BURNOUT AND VARIATION OF SHIFTS.....	71

## List of Illustrations

ILLUSTRATION 1: THE BIGGEST CONTRIBUTORS TO WORKPLACE STRESS.....	16
ILLUSTRATION 2: WORK-LIFE BALANCE.....	29
ILLUSTRATION 3: WORKING HOURS IN A HOTEL .....	39

## List of Abbreviations

APA = American Psychiatric Association

F&B = Food and Beverage

HR = Human Resources

HRM = Human Resource Management

HVAC = Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning

GAD = Generalized Anxiety Disorder

MDD = Major Depressive Disorder

N/A = Not Available

WLB = Work-Life Balance

# 1 Introduction

Working in the hospitality industry is a challenging job as the hotel needs to operate 24 hours a day seven days a week (Gamor, Amissah & Boakye, 2014). The stressful working environment in the hospitality industry is known to have negative consequences on the well-being of its employees (Chia & Chu, 2016). Working in the hospitality industry requires long labour hours with only short breaks in between, or even back-to-back shifts (Grow, 2013). According to Bubonya, Cobb-Clarke and Wooden (2014), one in five adults suffer from a mental illness, as affected employees do not have sufficient time to recover from exhaustion caused by work (Martilla-Santander, Lidón-Moyano, González-Marrón, Martínez-Sánchez & Martínez-Sánchez, 2017). This may be due to the fact that changing shifts interrupt the normal sleeping pattern. It has also been shown that shift workers require more time to recharge from an irregular schedule than employees having a consistent schedule (Grow, 2013).

Compared to other industries, the Burnout rate in the hospitality industry is the highest among all industries, as one in seven people are affected by Burnout (Lederer, Okumus & Van Niekerk, 2016). Lederer et al. (2016) suggest that this high Burnout rate may be related to the fact that hotel front-line employees have to constantly deal with demanding customers, chronic stress and long working hours. Generally speaking, Burnout lessens the employee's motivation to engage in work-related activities (Smith, Hughes, DeJoy & Dyal, 2017). According to Khamisa, Peltze, Illic and Oldenburg (2016) Burnout can be triggered by both personal and work stress. However, the various factors contributing to Burnout and other types of mental health issues will further be explained in Chapter 2.1.3.

## 1.1 Motivation and cognitive interest

During the author's internship working as a front-line employee in a five- star hotel she was required to work different shifts. As the hospitality industry is a very labour-intensive industry, the researcher can confirm that working different shifts can affect the mental state and subsequently the service outcome. Due to this experience, the researcher decided to conduct this research to examine if hotels in Vienna have some prevention techniques in order to diminish the number of affected employees.

Additionally, she would like to find out if current hotel employees experience some symptoms of mental health problems due to their working hours.

Concurrently with the researcher's own interest, literature regarding mental health problems in the hotel industry is difficult to find. Thus, this research contributes to the existing literature as research in the area of Burnout in the hospitality industry is hardly new (Lederer et al., 2016). Likewise, there is little known about stress and well-being in the hospitality industry. In addition to the scarcity of the influences of stress, the issue of job stress in the hospitality industry is getting more important (Chia & Chu, 2016). Furthermore, there is a lack of understanding of how stress can influence hotel employees (Davis & O'Neill, 2010). Moreover, almost all studies have been done on long working hours (Martilla-Santander et al., 2017) but hardly ever on shift-work. Besides that, studies on the influences of shift work have rarely been done on hotel workers, who are considered to be the most representative group in regard to shift work (Moon, Lee, Lee, Lee & Kim, 2015).

Another aspect of why this research is from great importance is that the topic of mental illnesses is not a widely talked topic in today's society. People suffering from mental illnesses are still considered to be threatening and uncomfortable, leading to them being discriminated by society (Davey, 2013). According to a few studies, stigmas towards people affected by mental health problems are still widespread and commonly held. In a UK wide survey with 1700 respondents, a large proposition stated that they will not employ someone with a mental health problem (Davey, 2013). However, today's society holds this stigma despite having sufficient knowledge about mental health problems or knowing someone with mental health problems. The negative stigma of mental health has its origin from the early society. Since these times people with mental disorders were regarded as different and hence excluded from society, because they have been perceived to be more violent and unpredictable (Davey, 2013).

## **1.2 Outline of the thesis: aim, research questions, hypothesis and its limitations**

The main aim of this thesis will be to investigate the various influences of shift work on stress levels and the human psyche of hotel employees. As mentioned above,

research regarding the influence of shift work on the mental state of a hotel employee is scarce. From a practical perspective, this research may help Human Resource managers to sufficiently handle and prevent stress and the resulting mental health problems of his/her employees caused by doing shift work, as affected employees put a heavy burden on the organization, in terms of absenteeism, high turnover and a decline in productivity (Petreanu, Iordache & Seracin, 2013). Simply said, shift work means working outside the traditional working hours, including working on weekends (McMenamin, 2017). As this research focuses on investigating the relationship between shift work and mental health issues found in hotel employees it is important to define the term “mental health” as an absence of mental disorders, such as depression or anxiety (Argyle, 1992). Furthermore, it is of great importance to know that stress relates to the emotional reaction towards high demands from work or stressors outside the workplace (Greenberg, 2011).

Thus, this study aims to address four main research questions:

*RQ1: To what extent do irregular shifts have an impact on stress levels?*

*RQ2: To what extent do irregular shifts have an impact on the human psyche?*

*RQ3: To what extent do irregular shifts in hotels have an impact on the employees' stress levels?*

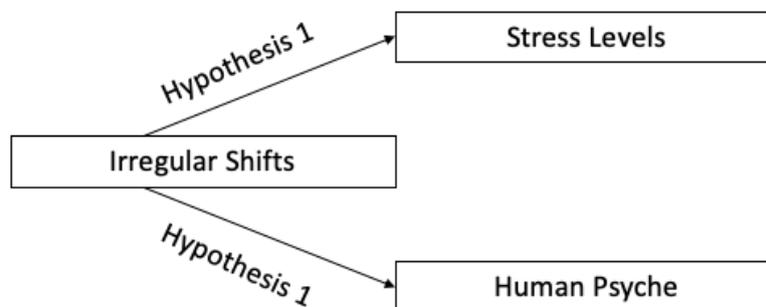
*RQ4: To what extent do irregular shifts in hotels have an impact on the employees' psyche?*

The topic will be investigated by generating primary research as well as using secondary research. In particular, secondary research will serve as a foundation for the literature review. Previous literature will help the researcher to define the various components of the study such as the hotel industry and its different jobs, shift work, stress, and mental health problems, work-life balance and lastly mental health problems within the hotel industry. The second part of the thesis will consist of primary research that is conducted with the help of face-to-face interviews with Human Resource managers and surveys directed to hotel employees working in different departments of different hotels operating in Vienna. Therefore, various

Viennese hotels were contacted and the Hotel Sacher and the Hotel Sans Souci agreed on taking part in this research. When defining shift work as the independent variable, and stress as well as the human psyche as the dependent variable, one can speculate that there might be a positive relationship between shift work and the stress levels or the negative impacts on the human psyche. Hence, the researcher developed a hypothesis to be investigated in this research.

*H1: Irregular shifts have a negative impact on stress levels and the human psyche.*

The suggested hypothesis is visually illustrated in the following model.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Model**

Nevertheless, there are some limitations to this study. Due to the short amount of time and the stigma that is still widespread about mental health issues only a small sample can be drawn, since people try to avoid being associated with this topic. Hence, this will result in a lack of generalizability of the findings. The possibility of not getting answers will be an additional limitation to the study. Moreover, the researcher is not an expert in the field of research that is why the findings will be exclusively based on the data generated from the interviews and the survey.

### **1.3 Outline of the thesis**

The following thesis will combine existing literature concerning the hotel industry, the different types of shifts, a selection of mental health problems in the hotel industry caused by stress as well as coping strategies for these problems in order to investigate the relationship of shift work done by hotel employees on the employees' mental health state.

The second chapter of this thesis aims to provide a theoretical background to the study, where the various components of the study will be defined and further explained to better understand the context of the study. At the beginning of Chapter 2, an introduction to the hotel industry and its various departments and jobs will be given. Furthermore, in this chapter, the term shift work will be defined and other industries implementing shift work will be identified. In addition, the topic of mental health will be described. Within this subchapter different mental health problems will be described, as these are arising issues in today's society. After providing an introduction to mental health problems, various coping strategies for dealing with stress and mental disorders will be explained. Concluding this chapter, a potential link between shift work and mental health problems in the hotel industry will be investigated.

Following the literature review, the third chapter describes the methodology and research process used during this study. The fourth chapter presents the interpretation of the conducted interviews as well as the outcomes of the survey. The fifth and last chapter will focus on linking the literature with the collected data of both the interviews and the survey. Moreover, it will include a general conclusion along with recommendations based on the interview results in order for the Human Resource departments to correctly handle employees affected by mental health issues.

## **2 Literature Review**

The following chapter is dedicated to give a theoretical background to the many components, which are being investigated in this study. There is already a broad variety of existing literature regarding mental health and its problems, stress at work and the hospitality industry. Since this study aims to investigate the impact of irregular shifts on stress levels and the mental health state, the first subchapter will give a brief introduction on the principles of mental health as well as on the theory of stress. After that, the different coping strategies and trainings for dealing with stress and mental health issues will be explained. Moreover, the concept of shift work will be defined including a description of the many impacts of shift work on the human body. Within the subchapter of shift work, a short insight into the hotel industry and its different departments will be given. The chapter will be concluded by a description of mental health problems commonly found in the hotel industry.

### **2.1 Mental Health**

Everyone has a mental health just like everyone has a physical health. A person's feelings can vary from a good mental well-being to severe mental health problems (CIPD, 2018). A mental illness can be present even though most people do not realise it (Australian Human Rights Association, 2010). Good mental health refers to the ability to behave, feel and think in the way one wants to live his/ her life (CIPD, 2018). The mental health of a person is as important as the physical health of an individual, thus, it is important to take care of it as people do it with their physical health (Ibec, 2016).

#### **2.1.1 Definition of Mental Health**

Several definitions of mental health have been proposed. Argyle (1992) provides a simplified definition of mental health, namely "Mental Health is the absence of anxiety, depression or any other symptoms commonly found in mental patients (Argyle, 1992, p.255). On the contrary, an illness signifies a deviation from a clearly defined norm, namely health (Szasz, 1960). However, Gerrig (2014) states that the word "health" refers to a general condition of body and mind being in consent with each other and not just the absence of an illness or an injury (Gerrig, 2014).

Compared to a medical disorder, which arises from an organismic dysfunction, a mental disorder shows psychological symptoms and can only be analysed using psychological concepts (Spitzer, Endicott & Micouland Franchi, 2016). Additionally, a mental disorder affects the brain and hence shows mental symptoms, whereas a physical disease affects the organ's in one's body and shows symptoms at the affected body part. Although, a mental disorder does affect the brain, one cannot classify it as a disease of the brain (Szasz, 1960).

Living with a mental illness is a state in which a person's feelings, mood, and behaviour are affected. Mental illnesses can be split into three categories, such as mood disorders, anxiety disorders, and psychotic disorders. Not to mention, the same mental health problem can vary in its course depending on the person (Australian Human Rights Association, 2010).

### **2.1.2 Stress**

Nowadays, traditional health and safety hazards are not the main causes of illnesses at work. Thus, it is of great importance to take stress into consideration, but stress is a component of everyone's life (Siegriest, 2015; Tavakoli, 2010). After physical problems, such as back pains or fatigue, stress has been the most reported issues in the workplace (European Union, 2010). One can define stress as "a biopsychological model that refers to the consequences of failure of an organism to respond adequately to mental, emotional or physical demands, whether actual or imagined (Al-Sowygh, 2013, p.97). According to Greenberg (2011) stress relates to the emotional reactions towards high demands from work or the stressors outside the workplace. However, it is important to differentiate between two types of stress, bad stress (Distress) and good stress (Eustress) (Al-Sowygh, 2013). "Bad" stress is labelled as distress and is mainly related to negative emotions and strains (Kozuznik, Rodríguez, Peiró, 2013). Conversely, Eustress can be described as a feeling of relief caused by a positive event, such as receiving a good result (Shahmohammadi, 2010). Eustress contributes to higher levels of organizational commitment, a better mental and physical health state, self-confidence as well as a higher self-esteem (Tavakoli, 2010). Nevertheless, distress and eustress can be experienced simultaneously in regard to the same stressor (Kozuznik, Rodríguez, Peiró, 2015).

As stress can originate from work or personal issues, it is crucial to distinguish between personal stress and work stress (Greenberg, 2011). Personal stress refers to stressors not being related to work but related to one's personal life, such as health problems, relationship problems and financial problems. Work-related stress, however, is caused by stressors found in the working environment, such as job demand, staff issues or working hours (Khamisa, Peltze, Ilic & Oldenburg, 2016). Stressors are demands which one is experiencing throughout the everyday life and stressors can further create stressors (Greenberg, 2011; Khamisa et al., 2016).

**56%** say telling their manager about a mental health issue would inhibit their career prospects.

The biggest contributors to workplace stress:



**Illustration 1: The biggest contributors to workplace stress**

Source: RelaxLikeABoss, n.d.

Perceived stress is influenced by externalities, one's personal traits and how well one can cope with various stressors (Karkoulian, Srour & Sinan, 2016). Influencing externalities include job overload, repetitive work or responsibility for others. Additionally, people with unhealthy colleague relationships are more likely to experience higher stress levels (Argyle, 1992). Shahmohammadi (2011) proposes several other causes of stress:

- **Exogenous** (external) factors derive from outside and the person has no control over them
- **Endogenous** (internal) factors are memories of previously having experienced a negative event, like failure

- The **combination of endogenous and exogenous factors**
- **System induced** factors: Systems can be schools, organizations or family

Shahmohammadi, 2011

Stress does have negative impacts on both a person's physical and mental health (Greenberg, 2011; Petreanu, Iordache & Seracin, 2013). If one does not deal properly with the experienced stress, it can result in the person developing a poor mental health (Petreanu, Iordache & Seracin, 2013). Furthermore, not only personal but also work stress have shown to be triggers of burnout (Khamisa et al., 2016). The human body reacts to stress by elevating the heart rate, increasing the heart rate and having increased respiration (Greenberg, 2011).

### **2.1.3 Mental Health Issues**

In a European wide survey, 14% of the respondents have answered that they have experienced stress, depression or anxiety due to their occupation (European Union, 2010). A mental illness can happen to everyone despite a person's age, gender or social background (Rethink, 2009). When having a poor mental health, it can severely impact a person's thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. When not being properly dealt with a mental disorder it can get to the point that the person may experiences problems dealing with his/her everyday life, which then further influences his/her relationships, his/her work and the general quality of life of a person (CIPD, 2018).

Lack of sufficient support mechanisms and coping strategies for stress can be a reason for developing a mental health problem (Ibec, 2016). Even though, there are many different mental health problems, some of them show similar symptoms. For this reason, affected may suffer from symptoms of more than just one illness or they may receive an unclear diagnosis (CIPD, 2018). According to Ibec (2016), the most common mental health issues are depression, anxiety, having been diagnosed in one in ten persons. Anxiety and depression are closely related, but both demonstrate two different mood states (Kalron, Aloni & Allali, 2018). For the simplification of this study, the researcher chose to only work on the most commonly diagnosed mental health problems, which occur due to shift-work.

### 2.1.3.1 Anxiety Disorders

The American Psychiatric Association (n.d.) states that one cannot compare the feeling of anxiety to the feeling of nervousness, as anxiety is a reaction to a high amount of stress. Anxiety can also be associated with stressful events, such as work pressure or personal issues (Ibec, 2016). A general definition of anxiety provided by the American Psychiatric Association states that anxiety is a feeling of fear of future concerns. Whenever this fear arises, the affected person experiences muscle tension and tries to avoid the situation, which causes anxiety (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.).

The anxiety disorder comes with various subtypes of the illness:

- Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- Panic Disorder
- Social Anxiety
- Phobias
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Gerrig, 2014

For people not affected by an anxiety disorder, it is hard to tell if a person is suffering from an anxiety disorder but nevertheless, there are some signs which indicate such a disorder. Typical signs of an anxiety disorder consist of:

- Changes in a person's behaviour
- Excessive worrying
- Trying to avoid certain tasks
- Experiencing an anxiety attack with all its symptoms

Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010

These symptoms can occur simultaneously with other types of symptoms or without and that is when one can classify it as an anxiety disorder. The symptoms of an anxiety disorder can vary in terms of their severity and thus, can put a burden on the

person's functioning during the day (Rethink, 2009). The feeling of anxiety includes nervous behaviour and inner turmoil (Kalron et al., 2018).

The Australian Human Rights Commission (2010) names three causes of anxiety disorders. If people in a family have previously experienced anxiety disorders, it is more likely that it will be carried onto other family members. Furthermore, an imbalance of chemicals in the brain which affects a person's thoughts, emotions and behaviour can be classified as biological causes of anxiety disorders. Changes within the family or excessive workload can also contribute to developing an anxiety disorder (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). Argyle (1992) also propose that failure, crisis or threatening events can cause anxiety.

For the purpose of this thesis, only three subtypes of anxiety disorder will be described.

### **Social Anxiety**

Social Anxiety, or sometimes called social phobia, refers to an anxious feeling before or during social interactions (Antony & Rowa, 2008; Lakuta, 2018). Affected people experience a feeling of anxiety when encountering different social situations, such as conversations, social events, crowded places and public speaking (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.; Antony & Rowa, 2008). However, one cannot compare shyness to social anxiety, as the disease has a severe impact on the person's daily life and even reduces a person's ability to function (Antony & Rowa, 2008). People suffering from social anxiety focus more on how they display themselves in front of other people as they fear to be negatively evaluated by others (Lakuta, 2018). Affected people also worry about embarrassing, humiliating themselves and be negatively judged by others (Antony & Rowa, 2008). Hence, the afflicted tries to avoid situations, which can trigger an anxiety attack (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.). According to Clark and Wells (1995) (as cited in Antony & Rowa, 2008), people diagnosed with social anxiety are aiming to make a positive impression towards other people but believe failing to do so. According to Lakuta (2018), social anxiety possesses five dimensions:

- Negative self-esteem

- Negative observation about oneself
- Avoiding failure and embarrassment
- Somatic and cognitive symptoms
- Anticipatory and post-event rumination

Lakuta, 2018

In the case of social anxiety, post-event rumination applies to socially anxious people as excessive thinking about oneself after a social event (Abbott & Rapee, 2004). Just like any other anxiety disorder, social anxiety has a negative impact on the psychological functioning of the person (Lakuta, 2018). If left untreated social anxiety can result in other mental illnesses, such as depression or substance abuse (Antony & Rowa, 2008).

### **Generalized Anxiety Disorder**

Generalized Anxiety Disorder arises by ongoing and heavy worrying about everyday situations, such as job performance or family (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.). Gerrig (2014), however, defines the generalized anxiety disorder as “an anxiety disorder in which an individual feels anxious and worried most of the time for at least six months when not threatened by any specific danger or object (Gerrig, 2014, p. 496).” A Generalized Anxiety Disorder severely impacts a person’s functioning during the day, since the person’s anxious feelings cannot be ignored or controlled. This is mainly due to the symptoms of the disorder (Gerrig, 2014).

Symptoms of a Generalized Anxiety Disorder include:

- Restlessness
- Feeling on the edge
- Difficulties concentrating
- Muscle tension
- Sleep disturbance
- Irritability

American Psychiatric Association, n.d.; Gerrig, 2014

To be diagnosed with a generalized anxiety disorder, one needs to show at least three of the above-mentioned symptoms (Gerrig, 2014). A generalized anxiety disorder and the social anxiety disorder show similar symptoms, such as trembling, heavy sweating and blushing (Lakuta, 2018).

### **Panic Disorder**

The term “Panic Disorder” has been used to refer to situations in which a person feels an intense fear lasting for only a few minutes (Olaya, Moneta, Miret, Ayuso-Mateos & Haro, 2018).

A panic disorder arises by recurring panic attacks, which consist of both psychological and physical stress. As for panic disorder, the symptoms can easily be confused with symptoms of having a heart attack, since both diseases show symptoms of chest pain, higher heart rate and loss of air (American Psychiatric Association, n.d.). However, panic disorders also reveal cognitive symptoms, including the fear of dying, fear of losing control or fear of going crazy (Brown, LeBeau, Liao, Niles, Glenn & Craske, 2015). To be diagnosed with a panic disorder, the affected person has to experience recurring panic attacks and has to be anxious about suffering future attack (Olaya et al., 2018).

#### **2.1.3.2 Mood Disorders**

A mood disorder can be defined as “a mood disturbance such as severe depression or depression alternating with mania (Gerrig, 2014, p.501).” Just like anxiety disorders, mood disorders also have a variety of sub-categories:

- Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)
- Bipolar I Disorder
- Bipolar II Disorder

Rehm, 2010

Again, for the simplification of this thesis, the author will only describe the Major Depressive Disorder and Bipolar I Disorder.

## **Depression**

Depression has been detected to be the most common mental illness among working-class people, with 300 million people suffering from Major Depressive Disorder worldwide (Argyle, 1992, Ng et al., 2018). The term “depression” is usually referred to as “human emotion of sadness that occurs in response to loss, disappointment, failure, or other misfortune (Rehm, 2010, p.1)” and counts as a chronic illness needing a long-term treatment (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Dictionary definitions state that depression is a feeling of being pressed down by some kind of force (Rehm, 2010). The mental disorder reflects itself through negative thoughts, moods, feelings and a general negative sense of well-being (Kalron, Aloni & Allali, 2018). Depression is not only a feeling of sadness but also experiencing a maniac stage, in which the person experiences a higher self-esteem, decreased need for sleep and talking more than usual. Conversely, the depressive mood shows symptoms of losing interest, losing weight, insomnia, and loss of energy. If a person shows only symptoms of the depressive episode, the person may be diagnosed with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD). If a major depressive disorder lasts longer than two years, it will be classified as a chronic illness (Rehm, 2010). Similar to anxiety disorders, not everyone experiences MDD as severe and as long as someone else. Some people might only experience depression for only a certain amount of time in their life, whereas others suffer episodically or chronically for many years (Gerrig, 2014). Additionally, when suffering from MDD one can develop psychotic features, like hallucinations and delusions but needless to say, the course of the disease differs from person to person (Rehm, 2010).

Argyle (1992) proposes that depression arises due to stressful events, whereas anxiety is caused by failure, crisis, and threatening events. Györfy et al. (2016) express that depression results from emotional exhaustion. Just like stress, depression causes emotional and physical problems (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

## **Bipolar I Disorder**

If the affected person experiences depressive and manic episodes, one can speak of a Bipolar I Disorder, whereby the person suffers from extreme mood swings

(Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010; Rehm, 2010). A Bipolar Disorder is underlined by its manic episode, which is characterized by elevated mood and euphoria without sufficient reasons and overestimating one's personal abilities (Gerrig, 2014). Various other signs of a Bipolar I Disorder are struggling to concentrate, a change in a person's personality, high levels of energy, and not accepting constructive feedback. Bipolar I Disorder can arise due to genetic predisposition, imbalances in the neurochemicals or stress and the resulting sleep disturbance (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010).

### 2.1.3.3 Burnout

Generally speaking, burnout is a syndrome of feeling emotionally and physically exhausted and is closely tied with a low self-esteem (Greenberg, 2011). According to Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter (2001), burnout possesses three dimensions:

- **Exhaustion:** emotional exhaustion of the affected due to the employee's diminishing of emotional resources
- **Depersonalization:** the person tries to put a distance between oneself and the workplace
- **Inefficacy:** reduced personal accomplishment

Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001

Especially, when working with other people, affected persons develop cynical attitudes towards the people they are working with. Consequently, high job dissatisfaction is provoked by low self-esteem and low motivation of the affected person (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Previous studies have displayed that job dissatisfaction is a major cause for burnout. Shanefelt et al. (2014) (as cited in Györfy, Dweik & Girasek, 2016) explains that employees who might be exposed to a stressful working environment but are satisfied with their job, will not eventually show symptoms of burnout. Furthermore, struggling to have a perfect work-life balance is another influencing factor of burnout (Györfy et al., 2016). As stated before, both personal and work stress have also shown to be triggers of burnout (Khamisa et al., 2016). A previous study by Maslach (1976) displayed that burnout occurs within the first years of working, meaning that people starting to enter the

workforce are more prone to be affected, which may lead to leaving their profession entirely (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Compared to depression, which can also arise due to the personal life, burnout is only related to work (Maslach et al, 2001). As burnout is a result of chronic stress at work, the disease lessens the employee's motivation to engage in work-related activities (Smith et al., 2017). People affected by burnout believe to not have opportunities for personal growth and development on the job as well as perceiving the job they are doing as meaningless and unnecessary. Organizational consequences of burnout are low quality of service provided by the affected employees, high turnover, absenteeism and low organizational commitment among the staff (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Moreover, there is a positive correlation between burnout and mental dysfunctioning. Some illnesses evoking from burnout include anxiety, depression and generally having a low self-esteem. However, some might argue that people dealing with a mental disorder are more likely to be able to cope with stressors (Maslach et al., 2001).

## **2.2 Coping Strategies for Mental Health Issues**

Whenever someone is experiencing a high amount of stress or is currently dealing with a mental health issue, it is important to provide the appropriate coping strategies to help the person overcoming this difficult situation in his/ her life (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). Nowadays the prevention of illnesses is more challenging compared to the 20th century. 100 years ago, the main cause of death was infectious diseases, however, in order to enhance the quality of life today, it is crucial to eliminate death associated with lifestyle factors, such as smoking, substance abuse or stress (Gerrig, 2014). When it comes to mental illnesses, managers need to either identify the origin of the employee's poor mental health state at the workplace or try to minimise the risks in order to prevent the problem from spreading (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). The term "coping" can be defined as dealing with stress or comprehend conditions that require more resources that the body can provide. Needless to say, people create an individual coping style throughout life (Shahmohammadi, 2011). In order to adequately treat a mental health problem, four steps need to be implemented in the workplace. Firstly, it is essential to estimate the severity of the mental health problem as early as

possible. Secondly, managers and supervisors must provide trainings on mental health issues and the following consequences to their employees. Thirdly, the organization should provide assistance to employees suffering from a mental health problem. Last but not least, the most important factor is that the organization has to raise awareness, as well as making sure that the correct actions are being taken (Shani & Pizam, 2009). The following paragraph will list the most commonly implemented prevention and coping strategies by organizations.

### **2.2.1 Problem Focused Strategies**

The following three types of coping strategies can be labelled as *problem-focused strategies* where the individual learns how to deal with the triggers by finding information about the problem situation and learning new skills to manage the problem (Shahmohammadi, 2011).

- 1) **Cognitive therapy:** helps the patient to identify the triggers of their anxiety so that the affected can turn his/ her negative thoughts into positive thoughts.
- 2) **The exposure theory:** the affected gets exposed to situations that causes his/ her anxiety until the person learns how to act in these situations.
- 3) **Social skills training:** helps the person to improve his/ her social and communication skills, such as eye contact, body language and presentation skills

Antony & Rowa, 2008

In addition to the above-mentioned problem-focused strategies, Shahmohammadi (2011) classifies two additional coping techniques:

- 1) **The appraisal focused coping strategy:** focuses on changing the individual's way of thinking
- 2) **Emotion-focused strategy:** proposes mediating and distracting oneself from the problem.

Shahmohammadi, 2011

### 2.2.2 Employee Assistance Programs

A good strategy for managers to create a healthy and safe working environment is to provide appropriate information and training for his/ her employees in the areas of mental health and stress management (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010). Various coping strategies in this field, which have been implemented by organizations, are explained by Greenberg (2011). These organizational coping strategies regarding stress and mental well-being include:

- **Employee Assistance Programs**, which are programs dedicated to assisting employees with personal problems.
- **Stress Management Programs**, which are provided to teach employees to effectively deal with stress and stressful situations (Greenberg, 2011). Usually, these trainings or programs show how people perceive and interpret stressful situations and how employees handle these situations (Argyle, 1992).
- **Wellness Programs**, which teach employees on how to live a healthy lifestyle. Wellness programs also include workshops on how to reduce stress at work.
- **Time Management Trainings** help employees to effectively organize their time in order to get their job done without falling behind work.

Greenberg, 2011

When providing employee assistance programs, it is important to ensure that these are available face-to-face, as well as online, and via telephone and video to make it as easy as possible to seek help (Grow, 2013).

### 2.2.3 Personal Coping Strategies

Some employees engage in sport and exercise in order to cope with stress or mental health problems. Exercise releases endorphins, which are neurotransmitters, that increase a person's mood, reduce symptoms of depressions and at the same time relieve stress and anxiety. Thus, one can say that endorphins are natural antidepressants (Kassymova, 2018). Exercise and a healthy lifestyle go hand in hand, as lessening the salt and fat intake and an increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables have a positive effect on coping with stress (Greenberg, 2011).

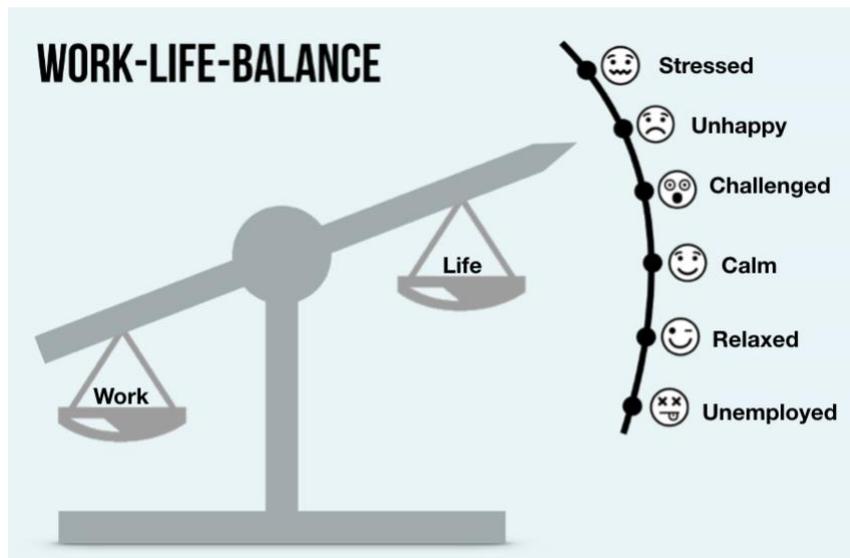
#### **2.2.4 Social Support**

Social factors play an essential role in the development of a mental illness. Hence, it is only reasonable to use these factors to provide specific prevention techniques. Besides that, social methods are useful to make employees more resistant to stress (Argyle, 1992). Some researchers have proposed that social support is of great importance when dealing with stress at work. Social support has a positive impact on health because the more an employee receives emotional help the less likely it is that the employee develops a mental illness. This can be explained by social support being provided by others diminishes stressors at work as it works as a barrier for stressors to develop further (Doorman & Zapf, 1999). Social support can roughly be defined as the resources provided by others, in terms of love, care, esteem and the connection to other people in a network (Gerrig, 2014). The theory of social support can be divided into three approaches. Affective participation, empathy, liking, and respect can be labelled as emotional social support. Having sufficient access to information in order to complete essential tasks at work can be named as the informational approach of social support. Being provided with shared opinions of others about oneself refers to the appraisal approach of social support (Doorman & Zapf, 1999). Not to mention, social support can come from a variety of sources. A person's family project positive effects on the person's health, by looking after one another. Moreover, people are more likely to talk to family members about problems they are facing at the workplace rather than talking to their colleagues. The love and care given by other family members increase a person's self-esteem and feelings. Friends have a direct positive effect on an individual's mental health, no matter if they are currently stressed or not. Colleagues or "work-mates" are the most effective source of social work, as they provide a buffer for the effects of stress on both physical and mental health (Argyle, 1992).

#### **2.2.5 Work-Life Balance**

In today's society, people place a greater emphasis on having a good work-life balance than previous generations but managing both a stressful job and spending enough time with the family has become increasingly difficult these days (Panisoara & Serban, 2013; Smith, 2010). For this reason, the majority of work-related conflicts arise from job stress (Karkoulou, Srour & Sinan, 2016). Hence, employees with a

balanced work-life relationship encounter lower stress levels than employees having a negative work-life relationship (Karkoulian, Srour & Sinan, 2016). The work-life balance is aiming to diminish the struggle of handling both work and family life to lessen the affected person's stress. Studies show two aspects of a work-life balance: work and family. Work is not only a fundamental part of life but also promotes a good person well-being because the earned money indicates a social status (Argyle, 1992; Ariza-Montes, Arjona Fuentes, Han & Law, 2018). It is hard to balance both family and job, however, these two dimensions are equally important. Yet, if not balanced properly both will lead to negative job performance, as previous studies indicate, that a lower work-life balance correlates with a lower organizational commitment (Adame-Sánchez, González-Cruz & Martínez-Fuentes, 2016; Panisoara & Serban, 2013). A poor work-life balance has been suggested to be an intermediate actor of the association between working hours and health-related outcomes (Martilla-Santander, Lidón-Moyano, González-Marrón, Martínez-Sánchez & Martínez-Sánchez, 2017). Irregular working hours and shift work generate an imbalanced work-life balance due to the little amount of time available to maintain a personal life (Martilla-Santander, Lidón-Moyano, González-Marrón, Martínez-Sánchez & Martínez-Sánchez, 2017). An imbalanced work-life relationship can also be referred to as a work-life conflict, as work interferes with the family time, and vice versa the time spent with the family interferes with work (Zhao, Qu, Ghiselli, 2011). A work-life conflict indicates an "inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect (Zhao, Qu, Ghiselli, 2011, p.47).



**Illustration 2: Work-Life Balance**

Adapted from: KarriereBibel, n.d.

Furthermore, high workloads may contribute to a higher stress level but do not necessarily have to, as a balanced work-life relationship can reduce stress levels of a person (Wickstrøm Jensen, Liu & Schøtt, 2017). Some organizations implement a wide range of programs, such as flexible schedules, family leaves and employee assistance programs to help their employees stabilizing their work-life balance. By offering these types of programs, the organization tries to increase the employees' commitment and also reducing employee turnover (Chiang, Birtch, Kwan, 2010). However, as already mentioned at the beginning of the paragraph, every person develops a different way of coping with stress or mental disorders not necessarily trying to treat them. Hence, people may also cope with stress by starting to drink or taking drugs (Shahmohammadi, 2011).

### **2.3 Shift Work**

Nowadays, businesses are competing to raise productivity to 24 hours a day (Moon et al., 2015). Therefore, work schedules have been changing from day-night schedules to a 24-hour society over the past century (Kang, Kwon, Choi, Kang & Kim, 2017; Moon et al., 2015). Due to new technological and organizational developments, it seemed appropriate to implement working times other than daytime (Kang et al., 2017). Generally speaking, a quarter of the global workforce is

currently employed in shift work due to the increasing demand of 24/7 services (Booker, Magee, Rajaratnam, Sletten & Howard, 2017). From a European perspective, one in five workers is currently employed in shift work (Kang et al., 2017).

### 2.3.1 Definition of Shift Work

The term “shift work” can be defined as “an arrangement of working hours that uses teams (shifts) of workers, in order to extend the hours of operation of the work environment beyond that of the conventional office hours (Kang et al., 2017, p. 2).” Simply said, shift work means working outside the traditional working hours, including working on weekends (McMenamin, 2007). Booker et al. (2017) however define shift work as working at times, in which humans are sleeping. Even though, shift work has mainly been found in the manufacturing industry, it is now expanding to the retail and service industries (Moon et al., 2015). Besides these industries, shift work is also used in the healthcare sector, security sector, transportation sector, and fire and police stations (Heathfield, 2018).

### 2.3.2 Types of Shift Work

Since shift work is being used to extend the business hours of any enterprise, it can mean that employees are required to work early in the mornings, at night or even on weekends (European Communities, 2009). According to McMenamin (2007), shift working can be differentiated into three different types:

- **Daytime shifts:** Daytime shift workers are scheduled to work between 6am and 6pm
- **Evening shifts:** An evening shift usually demands working hours between 2pm and midnight
- **Night shifts:** A night shift consists of hours between 9pm and 8am in the morning

McMenamin, 2007

In industries in which operations go beyond the usual eight hours, it can be beneficial to make use of extended shifts or overlapping shifts. Overlapping shifts

usually occur at the beginning and the end of each shift. For instance, two employees might work the same shift but start at different times (Heathfield, 2018).

### **2.3.3 Impact of Shift Work**

It has been proven by previous studies that working in irregular shifts and working at nights increase the possibility of diseases (Hulsegge, Gupta, Proper, van Lobenstein, Ijzelenberg, Hallman, Holterman & van der Beek, 2018). When shift work is done over a longer period, it can be risky for the employees, as these employees need longer to recover from the irregular hours and might even still feel tired after waking up (Grow, 2013). Consequently, the employees' emotions and cognitions are affected, leading to a diminishing performance. Furthermore, sleep deprivation due to the changing work schedules prompt sleep disorders and may even cause various chronic diseases, such as hypertension and diabetes (Györfy, Dweik & Girasek, 2016). In addition to the physical diseases, shift work might also have an effect on the mental health of a person (Pieh, Jank, Waiß, Pfeifer, Probst & Oberndorf, 2018). Pieh et al. (2018) state that a third of people working in night shifts are at a higher risk for psychiatric disorders. According to Grow (2013) earlier research has shown that shift workers experience negative moods towards work more frequently than regular employees. These negative moods may add to higher anxiety and stress levels (Grow, 2013). One can say that shift work and depression in hotel workers are related but is not the same for all types of shifts (Moon et al., 2015). For instance, Pieh et al. (2016) suggest a positive correlation of night shifts and depression. This can be explained by the theory that working at nights lead to interrupting the body's circadian rhythms as well as the sleep-wake pattern (Kang et al., 2017). Irregular working hours are not only having a negative impact on a person's mental health but also on a person's work-life balance as the person has little amount of time to maintain a personal life (Martilla-Santander et al., 2017).

Not to mention, the way employees cope with irregular working hours also depends on the individual itself. There are, however, some factors which can help individuals to cope with irregular working hours, such as work demands, schedules, salary or job satisfaction (Booker et al., 2017).

### **2.3.3.1 Austrian Labour Protection Act**

According to the new Austrian Labour Protection Act, which became law in January 2013, the term health not only includes physical but also mental health (OECD, 2015). Since then, employers do not only have to secure a healthy working environment but also have to assess the psychological strains. Psychological strains, such as lack of feedback and support, or unclear tasks are now identified as a risk factor in the working environment (OECD, 2015). When evaluating the workplace, a preventive focus needs to be placed on the organization of job tasks, the working environment and operational processes (OECD, 2015). In case of occurrence of a psychological strain, new evaluations have to take place. During the evaluation process, specific evaluation instruments can be chosen by the employer, such as employee representatives, standardized screening instruments or questionnaires, which are later proven by specialists (OECD, 2015). Organizations with more than 50 employees have the obligation to hire occupational health and safety specialists for 1.2 hours of risk prevention per year for every workplace and full-time employee (OECD, 2015).

Regarding the regulations on shift work, a shift worker is not allowed to exceed a working time of more than 40 hours on average, unless stated otherwise in a collective agreement. Furthermore, a shift schedule has to be made (AZG Abs. 2 §4a). The legal definition of working time means the period from the beginning to the end of work, excluding breaks (AZG Abs. 2 §2). Just like the weekly working hours of 40 hours, the daily 8 hours should not be exceeded unless otherwise agreed on in the employment contract (AZG Abs. 2 §3). Night workers are entitled to receive free health assessments before starting the position and thereafter yearly when having worked as a night worker for ten consecutive years (AZG Abs. 3a §12).

### **2.3.3.2 Hospitality Industry**

The tourism and hospitality industry counts as a major driver for the global economy and creates about 109 million jobs (Goh & Lee, 2018). The term hospitality, derived from the Latin word hospice, means „the reception and entertainment of guests, visitors or strangers with liberality and goodwill (Barrows, Powers & Reynolds, 2012, p.4).“ Working in the hospitality counts as one of the oldest professions and it involves working closely with other people or strangers (Barrows et al., 2012). The

hospitality industry has a wide range of job opportunities, including working in hotels, restaurants, cruise lines and other facilities in which customers can enjoy their leisure time (Doyle, 2018).

### **Definition of Hotel Industry**

Hotels, bed and breakfasts and other types of accommodations make up a big segment of the hospitality industry (Reynolds, 2012). Within this segment, one can differentiate between various types of lodging facilities, varying from tiny bed and breakfasts to mega resorts (Van Hoof, Vallen, McDonald & Wiener, 2007). For the purpose of this study, it is important to define what is meant by the term “hotel”. Lawson (1995) provides a simple definition of the term hotel, which describes a hotel as a „public establishment offering travellers and temporary visitors, against payment, two basic services: accommodation and meals (Lawson, 1995, p.2).” After having defined the term “hotel”, it is essential to emphasize that hotels come in all shapes and sizes. Thus, Lawson (1995) proposes five main types of hotels: mid-range hotels, high-grade hotels, budget hotels, resort hotels, and suite hotels. For instance, airport hotels fall into the category of mid-range hotels. These types of hotels provide both overnight accommodation and day use accommodation. Due to the proximity to the airport, an airport hotel offers big meeting facilities as it is the place where international people meet (Lawson, 1995). City centre hotels are considered as high-grade hotels, which do not only offer its facilities to guests but also to visitors. The larger the city centre hotel, the more facilities are being offered such as restaurants, retail shops, a business centre or a health and leisure club (Lawson,1995). In addition to city centre hotels, budget hotels are becoming more attractive for the transient market due to different price offers and styles of the hotels (Lawson, 1995).

### **Types of Jobs in a Hotel**

Depending on the type and size of the hotel, there are many different services offered in a hotel, including food service, recreation, entertainment, and personal services for guests (Lawson, 1995; Van Hoof et al., 2007). For instance, all-inclusive resorts offer facilities ranging from restaurants and bars to entertainment facilities and thus guests staying in resorts have little incentives to go anywhere else (Tourism

Concern, 2013). On the contrary, bed, and breakfasts only offer limited services and usually only operate during tourist seasons (Lawson, 1995).

The majority of jobs in the hospitality industry require to work closely with customers, but there are also back-of-house jobs, such as sales and marketing, accounting or finance (Doyle, 2018). The following chart illustrates the major departments of a hotel. Not to mention, the structure of the departments can alter according to the size and type of the hotel (Barrows et al., 2012).



**Figure 2: Major Departments in a 5\* Hotel**

Source: AMS Malicse-Somoray, 2014

For the purpose of this study, only the departments and the different jobs which commonly implement shift work will be discussed. These being:

### ***Housekeeping Department***

No matter what type of hotel, guests expect the room they are staying in is in a clean state (Barrows et al., 2012). That is why the housekeeping department's main responsibility is to maintain the cleanliness of the hotel. Cleaning the rooms and public areas, doing laundry and stocking linens are only a few of the department's daily duties (Doyle, 2018). The structure of a housekeeping department might look the same for different hotels, but it varies according to the size of the hotel. Generally speaking, the larger the hotel the more people are needed to maintain the cleanliness of the property. In larger properties, the housekeeping department may accommodate some sub-departments, such as an in-house laundry department (O'Fallon & Rutherford, 1994). The head of the housekeeping department is referred

to as the executive housekeeper (Doyle, 2018). An executive housekeeper controls and supervises the whole housekeeping department and its sub-departments (O'Fallon & Rutherford, 1994). Additionally, it is his/ her responsibility to maintain the cleanliness of the hotel. The housekeeping manager reports directly to the executive housekeeper and is responsible for the management of guest room cleaning and servicing as well as reporting the status of the room to the front-office (O'Fallon & Rutherford, 1994). Guest room attendants are in charge of cleaning the guest rooms in their assigned section of the hotel and reporting the status of the room to their floor supervisors. In addition to leading the team of guest room attendants, floor supervisors also examine the quality of the work done by their subordinates by inspecting the cleaned rooms. The cleaning of the hotel's public areas is undertaken by housemen, who report to a supervisor as well (O'Fallon & Rutherford, 1994). Not only the housekeeping manager but also the linen room supervisor is in constant contact with the front desk as the linen supervisor serves as the link between the front-desk, engineering department and the guests (O'Fallon & Rutherford, 1994).

### ***Front-Office Department***

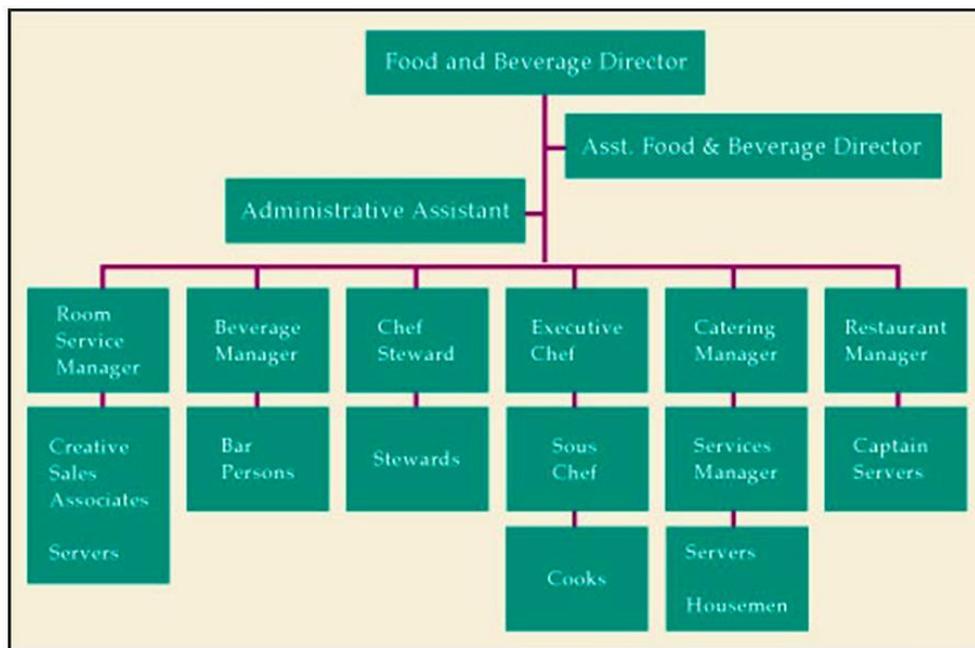
In every hotel, the front office department and its employees serve as the representation of the hotel by coordinating guest services and working closely with other departments (Barrows et al., 2012; Hayes, 2007). Like every department, the structure of the front-office department depends on the size of the hotel (Hayes, 2007). The employees of the front-office department are usually referred to as front-desk receptionists, front-desk clerks or front-desk agents. The most important function of the front-office employees is to represent the hotel throughout the stay of a guest (Barrows et al., 2012). In order to schedule the right amount of people to work in a specific shift, various factors need to be considered, such as the number of guests leaving and arriving at the hotel, and the occupancy on that day (Hayes, 2007). Depending on the shift, a front-office agent needs to perform specific tasks. The morning shift mostly starts between 6am and 7am and consists of checking-out guests. Subsequently, the front-office clerk might need to help in-house guests with questions or have to complete other tasks, such as communicating with the housekeeping department to manage the statuses of the rooms (Barrows et al, 2012). The usual check-in time of a hotel is in the afternoon; hence the tasks of the

afternoon shift involve greeting and checking-in guests (Barrows et al, 2012). After the afternoon shift finishes the night auditor starts posting all the charges (i.e. room charges) to the guests' reservation accounts, which were created during check-in. Then the auditor compares the hotel's balance from the previous day to the current day, in order to check all the transactions made throughout the day (Barrows et al., 2012).

In some hotels, personal services are offered to the guests. These types of employees are referred to as the bell staff or bell stand and are sometimes part of the front-office department (Barrows et al, 2012). Similar to a front-office clerk, a bell boy represents the hotel as they might have the first contact with the guest by welcoming them to the hotel (Barrows et al., 2012). Additionally, the bell staff might show the guests the facilities offered by the hotel while escorting them to their assigned room. In the room, the bell staff has the opportunity to explain the features and operations in the room (Barrows et al., 2012). Same as the bell staff, a concierge is part of the front office department and is responsible for fulfilling guest needs and respond to guest inquiries. The tasks can vary from booking a table in a restaurant to providing a babysitter for a guest's child (Doyle, 2018).

### ***Food & Beverage Department***

The second most important department after the rooms department is the food and beverage department. There are two groups of employees within the F&B department: cooks and service employees (Barrows et al., 2012).



**Figure 3: Organizational Structure of the F&B Department**

Source: ImgEditor, 2019

In most hotels, the head of the food production is called “executive chef” (Barrows et al., 2012). Executive chefs work a lot behind the scenes of a hotel by overseeing the whole food operations. Executive chefs not only supervise cooks, sous chefs and other employees working in the kitchen but also order the food needed for production, plan meals, and hire and train employees (Doyle, 2018; Barrows et al., 2012).

The second part of the department consists of the service personnel. According to Gartlgruber, Gartlgruber, Gutmayer, Lenger, Sigel, Siegel and Stickler (2005), the restaurant manager represents the establishment and is in charge of the working schedule, employee training and, daily income summary. The restaurant manager also works closely together with the head waiter, who is a representative of the restaurant, as well. The head waiter is handling the incoming reservations and later greets and seats the guest (Gartlgruber et al., 2005). A station waiter (chef de rang) is responsible for handling the guest in terms of taking orders, recommending dishes and handling guest checks (Gartlgruber et al., 2005). The station waiter gets assistance from the first waiter (Demi-Chef), who performs the same tasks as the station waiter (Gartlgruber et al., 2005). However, the aforementioned positions do

not participate in serving the ordered food to the tables. This task is done by the waiters or waitresses (Gartlgruber et al., 2005). Furthermore, the waiters and waitresses interact with the customers on a face-to-face basis and provide the mis-en-place for the next customers (Doyle, 2018; Gartlgruber et al., 2005).

Some hotels even offer a catering service, which is headed by the catering manager. Larger properties possess their own full-time or part-time catering staff. Smaller properties might obtain their service personnel from their regular service employees (Barrows et al., 2012).

### ***Engineering Department***

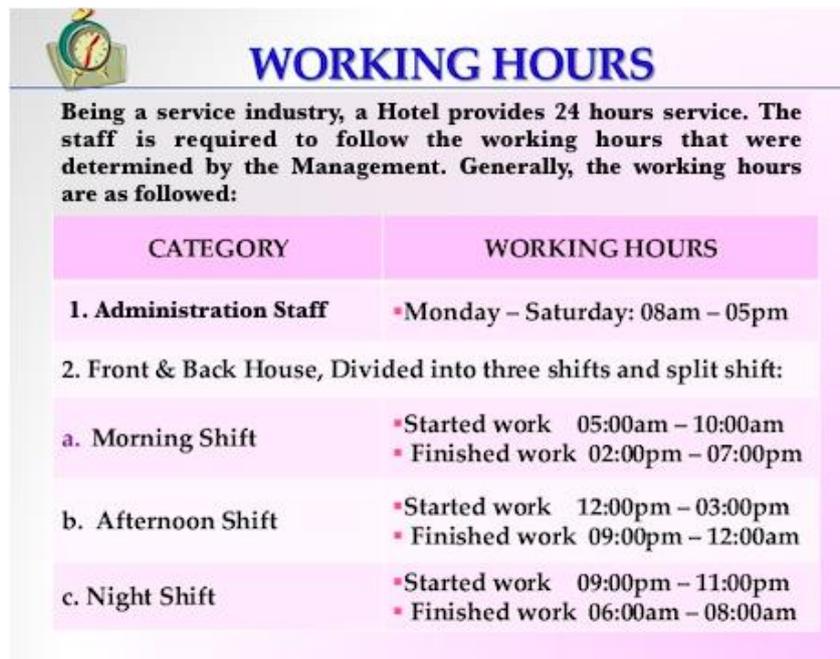
The engineering department is a very important department within the hotel (Barrows et al., 2012). In larger hotels, the engineering department has more duties as compared to smaller properties (Barrows et al., 2012). In smaller properties the engineers mainly complete routine maintenance and small repairs, whereas in larger properties the engineering staff is also in charge of the HVAC, lighting and elevator systems (Barrows et al., 2012). The engineering staff is usually under the supervision of a chief engineer (Barrows et al., 2012).

One can say that all these departments require different working hours and different types of shifts with varying tasks according to the time of working. Not to mention, the departments and subsequently the working hours or shifts of the employees also vary according to the type and operation of the hotel (Barrows et al., 2012).

### **2.3.4 Shift Work in the Hotel Industry**

Since the demands for hotels and hotel workers are increasing it is needless to say that high rates of shift work in the accommodation and service industry are a global trend and are prone to increase even more (Moon et al., 2015). It can be said that the hotel industry is a very cyclical industry with fluctuating customer demand throughout the year. Therefore, working in the hotel industry requires working long hours, with only short breaks in between or even back-to-back shifts (Grow, 2013). Since shift work is usually applied in high demand industries, restaurants and bars need to apply shift work as an employment strategy in order to accommodate the needs of the guest, meaning they have to operate outside the traditional working hours of 6am to 6pm (McMenamin, 2007). Hence, employees are required to work

evening shifts or even night shifts or sometimes also on weekends. The same of course also applies to the hotel industry, since a hotel operates 24 hours a day for seven days a week, employees are required to work in alternative shifts (McMenamin, 2007). Thus, it can be said that that shift work is a fundamental part of the hotel industry.



CATEGORY	WORKING HOURS
1. Administration Staff	Monday – Saturday: 08am – 05pm
2. Front & Back House, Divided into three shifts and split shift:	
a. Morning Shift	Started work 05:00am – 10:00am Finished work 02:00pm – 07:00pm
b. Afternoon Shift	Started work 12:00pm – 03:00pm Finished work 09:00pm – 12:00am
c. Night Shift	Started work 09:00pm – 11:00pm Finished work 06:00am – 08:00am

**Illustration 3: Working Hours in a Hotel**

Source: Adapted from SlideShare, 2014

Generally speaking, 67% of the labour force has to work at the weekend or during the night (Seibt, Süße, Spitzer, Hunger & Rudolf, 2015). According to Tourism Concern (2013), 80% of all-inclusive resort employees are employed in shift work, whereas in other types of hotels it is 10% less. Unpredictable working hours and infrequent shifts are only a few of the factors why the hotel industry experiences a high employee turnover with employees changing hotels after two to three years and a low average age of only 36 years (Seibt et al., 2015). Currently, there is a big trend towards implementing flexible working hours in the hotel industry to prevent employees from leaving the job due to unhealthy working hours. Flexible hours should also increase employees' motivation and loyalty towards the hotel (How the hotel, n.d.)

## 2.4 Stress and Mental Disorders in the Hotel Industry

Generally speaking, work can be good for the body but in some cases, work can also make the body sick due to stress (Argyle, 1992). Nevertheless, the demand levels can vary from industry to industry (Soni & Rawal, 2014). Since stress, depression, and anxiety has considerably increased in the hotel sector, one can classify the hotel industry as a challenging working environment (European Union, 2010; Hofman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2017). Additionally, the changing demand within the seasons, irregular working hours and shifting duties are factors to why the hotel industry provides a very stressful working environment (Hofman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2017). The long working hours, the lack of job control and the high demand of the guests are only a few of the most commonly reported causes of stress in a hotel. If the caused stress remains untreated, it places a high burden on the individual, in terms of anxiety, depression and health problems (Chiang, Birtch & Kwan, 2010). Maslach and Jackson (1981) argue that people in human services are more prone to burnout due to the amount spent dealing with other people. Furthermore, burnout can result from role ambiguity and role conflict. For instance, not knowing what is being expected from oneself on the job. Hence, burnout counts to the greatest occupational hazard whereas service employees are more often affected by burnout (Cheng & O-Yang, 2018). Quantitative and qualitative role overload, such as long working hours and high demands on mental requirements are proposed by Shani and Pizam (2009) to be additional contributors to employee burnout. Lastly, previous research has shown that people working evening shifts or night shifts will be more likely to come down with a mental disorder (Shani & Pizam, 2009). In many organizations, work schedules for the following week are posted at least a week in advance, thus allowing workers very limited opportunity to balance work, social and family responsibilities (McNamara, Bohle, Quinlan, 2011). Moreover, many front-line employees perceive their job as insulting or humiliating as they often need to face demanding or even rude guests. This type of behaviour by the guests can provoke problems for the employees since the employee has to suppress their actual feelings (Shani & Pizam, 2009). Hotel employees are generally required to always show a positive emotion towards the guest, even though it may not reflect the employees' current emotional state (Hofman & Stokburger-Sauer, 2017). Employees affected by

stress or a mental disorder also face difficulties in terms of concentration, time management, clear thinking and teamwork (Shani & Pizam, 2009).

#### **2.4.1 Impact of Stress and Mental Disorders on a Hotel**

Stress and the resulting mental illnesses also burden high costs on the organization (Bubonya, Cobb-Clark & Wooden, 2017; Greenberg, 2011). From an organizational view, stress and mental illnesses result in absenteeism, high turnover and a declining productivity (Petreanu, Iordache & Seracin, 2013). Since, human resources play an important part in the hotel industry, human resource management is from equal importance, as the employees contribute to the quality of service perceived by the hotel guests (Ariza-Montes et al., 2018; Gamor et al., 2014). Hotel employees assume that high staff turnover is caused by the number of working hours and the pressure put on them by the job (Mohisin, Lengler & Kumar, 2013). The term “turnover” can be defined as the rate employees will be replaced (Van Hoof et al., 2007). According to Chia and Chu (2016), hotel employees are also more likely to participate in presenteeism, which relates to going to work even though the person is feeling sick (Chia & Chu, 2016).

### 3 Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology of this thesis is being described. The methodology that has been used for this thesis has been chosen in order to acquire information and draw conclusions about the influences of shift work on the stress levels and the mental health of employees in the hotel industry.

#### 3.1 Aim

To review, the main aim of this thesis was to investigate the different impacts of shift work on the stress level of hotel employees and how these negative effects will influence the mental health of affected hotel employees. Additional to investigating the impacts of irregular shifts on the mental health of a person, the researcher wanted to see if Viennese hotels provide coping strategies for stress and mental health problems. Additionally, several secondary aims have been identified at the beginning of this thesis. These secondary aims included the concept of shift work and its impacts on a person's health. Furthermore, it was of great importance to define the theory of stress and mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and burnout.

For the purpose of this study, a mixed method approach has been undertaken, including conducting interviews with Human Resource managers of Viennese hotels and distributing surveys among hotel employees, who are required to do shift work. In order to achieve the objectives of the thesis, the researcher combined both primary and secondary data. The secondary data, which was gained by reviewing several books and journals has been applied to form the theoretical framework of the study, as well as to develop the interview and survey questions. Since previous research has not touched upon the impacts of shift work on hotel employees, the researcher proposed the following hypothesis:

*H1: Irregular shifts have a negative impact on stress levels and the human psyche.*

The outcome of the specifically for this purpose developed survey should serve as a basis to answer the proposed hypothesis.

### 3.2 Research Design

Generally speaking, the research design describes the plan of methods and procedures used in the research to gain and interpret data. More specific, research design refers to the researcher's plan on how to answer the research questions (Shakula, 2008). It includes a variety of objectives, such as:

- The information sources from which information will be drawn
- The type of data
- The design techniques (e.g. survey, observation, etc.)
- The sampling method

Shakula, 2008

Secondary data is mostly gathered from already existing literature, whereas primary data is collected by the researcher solely for the purpose of answering the research questions. Primary data can be collected using either a quantitative or a qualitative approach (Shukla, 2008). Primary data is new data which is collected particularly for the purpose of answering the current research questions (Hair, Wolfinbarger-Celsi, Oritunau & Bush, 2013). Qualitative research is used whenever the researcher wants to gain insights into situations and behaviours (Armstrong, 2010). Qualitative research is mainly gathered from a small number of respondents using interviews or observations, while quantitative research rather focuses on the researcher's viewpoint on the research question (Armstrong, 2010; Shukla, 2008). The aim of quantitative research is to assemble information by using formalized standard questions and predetermined response options in surveys or questionnaires directed to a larger sample (Shukla, 2008). Quantitative research requires statistical analysis of the survey and questionnaire outcome (Armstrong, 2010). Furthermore, the quantitative research's objective is to investigate the relationship between to variables. Since, quantitative research is directed towards a large sample size, it provides a better generalizability, reliability and validity (Shukla, 2008).

As this study aims to investigate the relationship between irregular shift and the effects on stress level as well as the effects on the mental health of the employee,

the researcher chose a causal design. Causal design enables the researcher to explain the cause and effect of two or more variables (Hair et al., 2013).

### **3.2.1 Sampling Design**

The process of sampling refers to the process of selecting an appropriate number of people from a larger group from which later generalized conclusions can be drawn (Shakula, 2008). Sampling is only done when it is impossible to get findings from a census or target population (Hair et al., 2013). The target population can be defined as a group of elements possessing the same characteristics, which are useful for investigating the objective of the research (Shakula, 2008). When defining the sample size, it is important to take both qualitative and quantitative factors into consideration (Shakula, 2008).

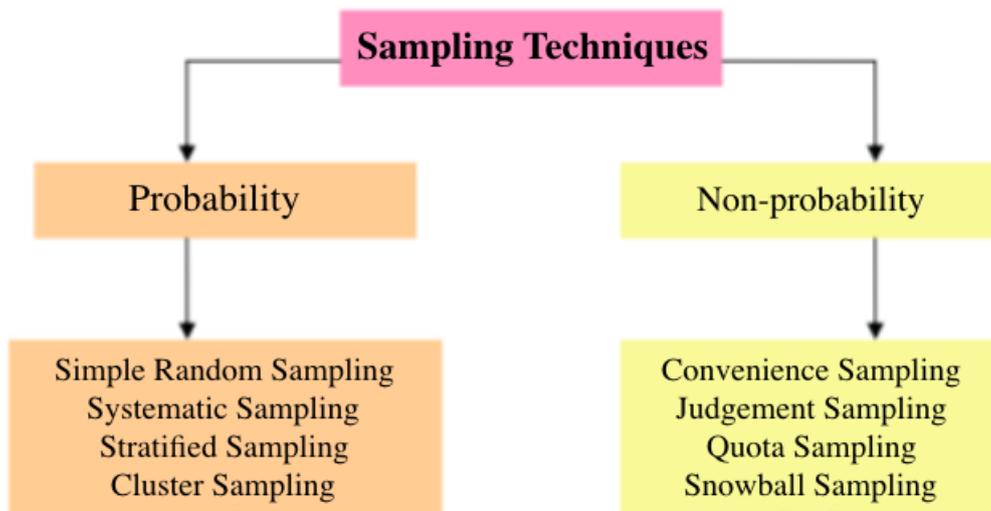
Some of these factors include:

- The objective of the research and expected outcome
- Sample size in previous studies on the same topic
- Degree of accuracy
- The amount of statistical data needed

Hair et al., 2013; Shakula, 2008

Not to mention, the sample size also varies with the type of study that is being undertaken (Shakula, 2008).

When it comes to the sampling design, one can choose between probability sampling and non-probability sampling (Hair et al., 2013).



**Figure 4: Sampling Techniques**

Source: Shakula, 2008

For the purpose of this study, the researcher decided on a non-probability sampling technique, since the study focuses on the hotel industry and the researcher believes that hotel employees will fulfil the requirements in order to provide the necessary information to answer the research questions. As it can be seen in the illustration above, non-probability sampling can be further divided into four approaches:

1. Convenience sampling
2. Judgement sampling
3. Quota sampling
4. Snowball sampling

Shakula, 2008

Judgement sampling, or sometimes called purposive sampling, was chosen for this research, whereby the researcher selected a sample which will meet the requirements of the study (Shakula, 2008). Hence, the researcher contacted different hotels based in Vienna, asking if the employees, preferably front-line employees, such as waiters, receptionists, or concierges are willing to fill out the survey concerning the impacts of irregular shifts on stress levels and mental health. Furthermore, the researcher approached various Human Resource managers of Viennese hotels, because she believed that the interview partner will provide the

necessary information on how hotels in Vienna deal with their employees suffering from stress or a mental disorder.

### **3.3 Unit of Analysis**

In regard to the data collection method, one needs to differentiate between qualitative and quantitative data collection methods (Hair et al., 2013). Qualitative data collection methods include text, image, audio or video data. Some of these data collection methods are: Interviews, focus groups, case studies or observations (Hair et al., 2013). Quantitative methods for collecting data can either be surveys or experiments (Armstrong, 2010). As a mixed method approach, consisting of elements of both quantitative and qualitative methods has been chosen for this research, the author selected primary data by using a survey with predefined questions and semi-structured interviews.

#### **3.3.1 The Survey**

To begin with, a survey consists of formalized questions using one or more measurement scales, to help the researcher gathering primary data (Shakula, 2008). A survey usually starts with a cover letter, which gives a brief introduction to the topic and motivates participation in the research (Hair et al., 2013). When using this method in research, it is essential to develop a survey which encourages people to get involved and complete it accordingly (Shakula, 2008). Before developing the actual survey, the researcher must determine the information needed by looking at the research questions and hypotheses (Hair et al., 2013). Additionally, the researcher has to choose a platform on which a high response rate will be achieved (Shakula, 2008).

The survey for this research was administered over the Internet, whereby the respondents were asked to go to a specific website to complete the survey. The link to the survey was posted on Facebook, on both the private account of the researcher and in the private group of Modul University, as well as on the researcher's Linked-In account, as the researcher believed that fellow students and former colleagues would meet the requirements to answer the survey due to the same education or occupation. Moreover, the researcher asked her interview partners to distribute the survey among their employees.

Once the researcher decided on the needed information and the way the survey is being administered, the next step is to develop the questions being asked (Hair et al., 2013). In research, there are two types of questioning methods from which a researcher can choose: open-ended (unstructured) questions and close-ended (structured) questions. Open-ended questions are formulated in a way that the respondent has to give an answer using his/her own words or expressing his/her own opinion (Shakula, 2008). On the other hand, close-ended questions provide the respondent with pre-defined answers from which the respondent can choose (Hair et al., 2013). There are three types of close-ended questions: dichotomous, multiple choice and scale questions. Dichotomous questions only give the respondent two response alternatives (Shakula, 2008). For instance:

*Are you currently employed in a job position that requires you to work in shifts? –  
Yes/ No*

Multiple choice questions serve as an extension to dichotomous questions, by providing a set of answers from which the respondent can choose one or more alternative (Shakula, 2008).

*How long have you been working in the hotel industry?*

- *Less than a year*
  - *1-5 years*
  - *5-10 years*
- *More than 10 years*

Scale questions can consist of various measurement scales (Shakula, 2008). The questionnaire for this research consisted also of some questions using a Likert scale. A Likert scale asks the respondent on the degree of agreement or disagreement about a specific statement (Hair et al., 2013). Thus, the respondent is provided with different statements to which he/ she is asked to answer within a range of “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” (Hair et al., 2013). For instance, in this study, the respondent is asked to give an opinion on:

*I find jobs in the hotel industry stressful.*

### 3.3.2 The Interviews

A personal interview, or sometimes called face-to-face interview, is used by researchers when a specific target population is being studied (Sincero, 2012). Additionally, the respondent is encouraged to share their personal view, experience, beliefs, and motivations on a specific topic (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008). Personal interviews are used when researchers want to collect deeper information on a research topic (Sincero, 2012). The face-to-face method is commonly implemented because the respondents are more likely to answer the questions due to the familiar environment (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008; Sincero, 2012). Since there is a lack of research on the coping strategies for stress and mental disorders in the hotel industry, the researcher believed that interviews will bring appropriate findings concerning the coping strategies offered by Viennese hotels to the employees. Whenever one is conducting an interview, it is important to start with easy questions and then progress to more complex questions (Gill et al., 2008). In a good interview, the questions should be open-ended, because the interviewee is motivated to express their opinion in long answers (Gill et al., 2008; Sincero, 2012).

For this thesis, the author chose to follow a semi-structured interview approach, as she believed this method will be useful to answer the proposed research questions. Semi-structured interviews are composed of key questions that help define the areas being researched. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewer to ask follow-up questions in order to get a deeper insight into a question (Gill et al., 2008).

The two interviews have been conducted by the researcher herself. Each interview lasted between 15 to 30 minutes. All interviews have been conducted in English on a face-to-face basis. Of course, the interviewees were informed about the choice of language when asking for his/ her participation. All interviews have been conducted at the workplace in a quiet room, as the interviews were audio recorded. Therefore, the researcher asked for consent to record the interview and all participants agreed to that.

The framework of the interviews consisted of a set of key questions:

1. Question Block 1: Opening Phase

The first part of the interview focused on the position of the interviewee within the hotel. The questions aimed to find out how long the interviewees have worked in the area of HR and how long he/ she works for the hotel. Furthermore, the interviewees were asked if they have any education concerning HR management.

- How long have you been working in the area of HR?
- Since when are you the HR manager at...?
- Did you already have prior experience with HR Management before you started working at...?
- Do you have some academic education concerning HR management?

2. Question Block 2: The Subjective Theory of Stress

In this part of the interview, the author aims to find out the personal definition of the interviewees for the term “stress”, as well as what they believe contributes to a high amount of stress. Moreover, the respondent had to provide an answer to if they think stress impacts an employee’s performance on the job. Last but not least, the interviewees were asked about their personal opinion if they believe that front-line employees are more stressed due to the amount of time dealing with other people.

- What comes to your mind when you hear the term “stress”?
  - What are some things that are likely to contribute to a high amount of stress?
  - How much do you think does stress impact the employee’s performance on the job?
  - In your personal opinion do you believe that front-line employees (such as servers, waiters or receptionists) are more prone to stress due to the amount of time dealing with other people?

This specific order of the questions enabled the research to first identify the interviewee’s personal definition of the term “stress”. Afterwards, the researcher

could base the next questions, such as the factors which contribute to stress, on the interviewee's perspective on stress.

### 3. Question Block 3: The Subjective Theory of Mental Health

This section of questions mainly focused on the interviewees' ideas of mental health and the importance of promoting a good mental health at the workplace. Again, the interviewees were asked if they believe that a bad mental health condition influences the service outcome of an employee.

- What do you link the word "mental health" to?
- What is your opinion on promoting a good mental health at the workplace?
  - What is your opinion about the relationship between a poor mental health and the service outcome of employees?
  - Do you believe that the statement that "*front-line employees (such as servers, waiters or receptionists) are more prone to mental health problems than people working in the back of a hotel*" is true?
  - Do you think this statement is true for the hotel you are working in?

Again, the structure of the questions allowed the researcher to link the interviewee's personal definition of mental health with their opinion on the influences of mental health problems on the service outcome of an employee.

### 4. Question Block 4: Stress and Mental Health in the Hotel

The last part of the interview consisted of questions being directed to find out if the hotel provides trainings or coping strategies for stress or mental health problems. In case the hotel offered some trainings, the author tried to find out what is being taught in them. Last but not least, the author asked the interviewee if the hotel promotes a good work-life balance and if the hotel offers any sports activities the employees may take part in.

- Does your hotel provide any trainings regarding time management and living a healthy life for your employees?
- If yes, could you briefly describe the content that is being taught in these trainings?

- To what extent does this hotel promote a good work-life balance?
- What kind of coping strategies do you propose to your employees in case of dealing with extreme stress at work?
- Do affected employees have the option to talk to someone here in the hotel when they believe to deal with a high amount of stress and cannot cope anymore?
- What happens in case of an employee suffering from a severe mental health issue, such as depression or anxiety?
- Are you offering any sport activities in which employees can participate outside the hotel?

After having determined the interviewee's thoughts on stress and mental health in the hotel industry the last set of questions were aimed to find out how hotels deal with employees experiencing stress and mental health problems. The final questions dealt not only with the topics regarding coping strategies, work-life balance and sports activities provided by the hotel, but also with whether employees have the opportunity to talk to someone in the hotel about their problems.

### **3.4 Ethics**

During the process of this research, the author had to consider various ethical issues. Since a mixed method approach has been considered for this thesis, ethical issues of both quantitative and qualitative research have to be acknowledged (Creswell, 2007). It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the protection of the participants' privacy and anonymity (Hair et al., 2013). Furthermore, the researcher had to inform the participants about the purpose of the study and the importance of his/ her participation (Creswell, 2007). Nevertheless, it is essential for the researcher to not publish any private information of the participants of the study that may be detrimental to his/ her interest (Armstrong, 2010). In regard to the qualitative research approach, the author is required not to bias the findings depending on her judgements. The same consideration needs to be applied to the quantitative data analysis (Babbie, 2013).

## 4 Evaluation and interpretation of the interview/ survey

The next chapter is dedicated to the analysis of the survey and the interpretation of the conducted interviews. At the beginning of the chapter, the respondents of the survey and the interview partners will be briefly introduced. Afterwards, a summary and interpretation of the findings will follow.

### 4.1 Survey Participants and Evaluation of Survey

The first table gives an overview of the survey respondents' demographics, including their age, gender, the department they are working in, how long they have been working in the hotel industry and if they are currently employed in shift work.

<i>Age</i>	
<b>16-20</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>21-30</b>	<i>18</i>
<b>31-40</b>	<i>2</i>
<b>41-50</b>	<i>2</i>
<i>Gender</i>	
<b>Female</b>	<i>16</i>
<b>Male</b>	<i>7</i>
<i>Departments</i>	
<b>Front- Office/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services</b>	<i>14</i>
<b>Food &amp; Beverage</b>	<i>5</i>
<b>Event Operations</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>Housekeeping</b>	<i>1</i>
<b>Security</b>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>Engineering</b>	<i>N/A</i>
<b>IT</b>	<i>1</i>

<b>Marketing</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Working Experiences</b>	
<b>&lt; 1 year</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1-5 years</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>5-10 years</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>&gt; 10 years</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Currently being employed in Shift Work</b>	
<b>Yes</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>7</b>

**Table 1: Survey Participants**

The first table gives an overview of the survey participants' demographics, including age, gender, department the respondent is working in, and how long the respondent is already working in the hotel industry. The final sample included 23 respondents, showing a surplus of female respondents. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents were aged between 21 years and 30 years. Employees working in the Front Office department are the most represented within this sample. Most of the participants have been working in the hotel industry for 1-5 years. From the overall sample, 16 are currently employed in shift work, whereas the remaining 7 have to work normal hours. However, it needs to be mentioned that some values are missing, since a few respondents did not give answers to some of the questions.

## Stress



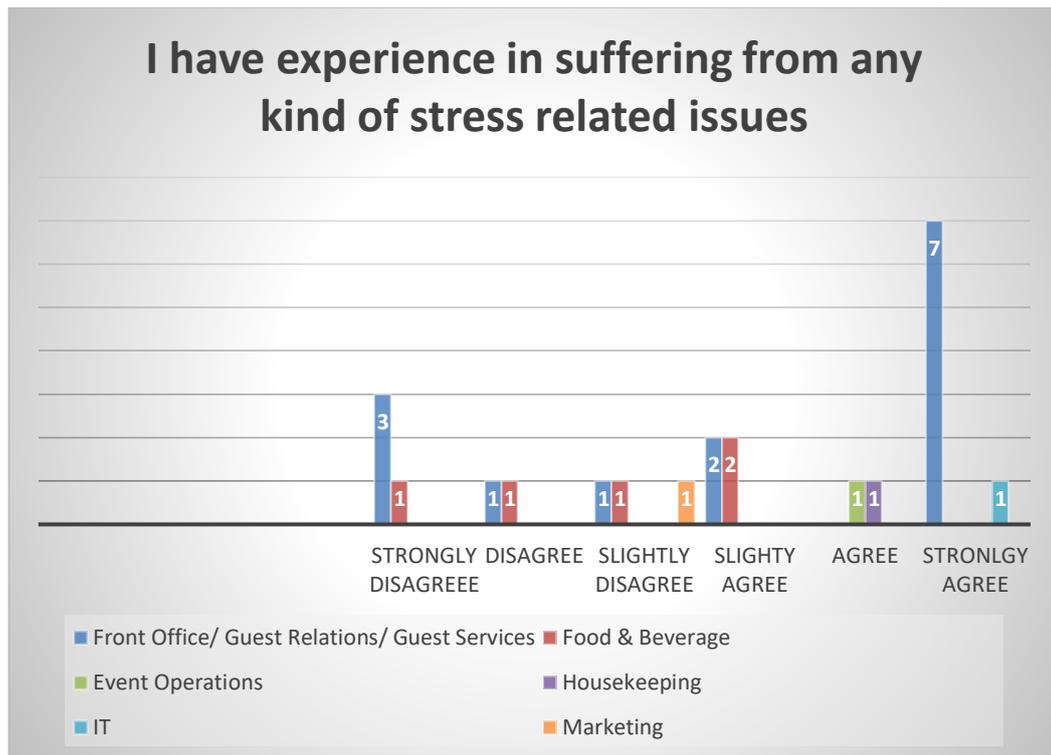
**Figure 5: Respondents' opinions on whether their job is stressful**

As it can be seen in the figure above, only one person working in the Front Office department disagrees to the statement whether they believe their job is stressful. Another Front Office employee only slightly disagrees with the statement. Three people of the Front Office department, Food and Beverage department and one person of the housekeeping department slightly agree to this statement. Five employees working in the Front Office department agree that their job is stressful. The same is perceived by two F&B employees. 4 out of 14 Front Office employees strongly agree to having a stressful job. One person from each of the departments IT, Marketing and Event Operations also strongly agree with this statement.



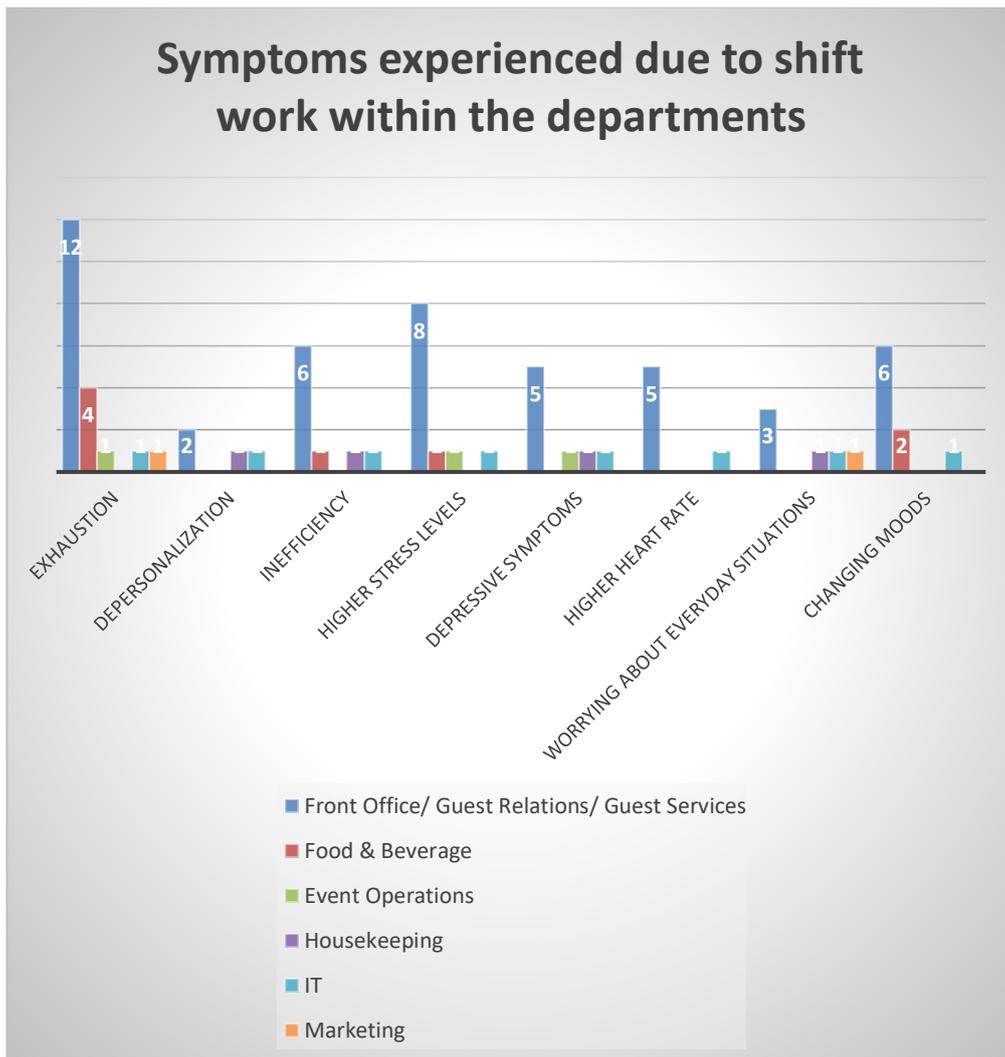
**Figure 6: Respondents' opinions on whether they feel stressed**

Referring to Figure 6 five people working in the Front Office department strongly agree to the statement of whether they feel stressed. The same has been said by the employee working in IT. One person from the departments of F&B, Event Operations and Housekeeping expressed to be agreeing with this statement. As for the Front Office department, two of its employees agreed to feeling stressed. One person from the Food & Beverage department and three people of the Front Office department only slightly agreed to this statement. Two people each from the Front Office and Food & Beverage department slightly disagree to whether they feel stressed. The remaining three people, working in the Front Office and the Food & Beverage department, do not feel stressed.



**Figure 7: Respondents' opinions on whether they have experience with stress related issues**

Figure 7 shows that the majority of people strongly agree to have experienced any kind of stress-related issues. Again, the most answers of “strongly agree” have been provided by the Front Office department and one person in the IT department. Two people working in Housekeeping or the Event Operations have agreed to the statement. Two people each from the Front Office and Food & Beverage departments slightly agree to the statement of whether they have experience with any kind of stress-related issue. One person working in Marketing, one person working in F&B and one person working in the Front Office department slightly disagree with this statement. Two people, one from F&B and one from the Front Office are disagreeing to have been experiencing any stress-related issues. Lastly, three people of the Front Office department and one person of the Food & Beverage department strongly disagree with the statement.



**Figure 8: Frequency of experienced Symptoms due to shift work within the various Departments**

In terms of the various symptoms experienced by the employees, exhaustion is the most represented within the Front Office department. Additionally, Food & Beverage employees, as well as each employee working in the departments: Event Operations, IT and Marketing. Depersonalization, being defined as distancing oneself from the workplace, is being experienced by two of the Front Office employees, as well as experienced by the housekeeping employee and the IT employee. Inefficiency, being defined as achieving lower personal accomplishments is the most experienced by the Front Office department. Moreover, one employee of each of the departments Food & Beverage, Housekeeping and IT complain about not achieving high personal accomplishments. Higher stress levels are frequently found in the Front Office, Food & Beverage, Event Operations and IT department.

Employees working in the Front Office department, Event Operations department, Housekeeping and IT often encounter depressive symptoms. Five people working in the Front Office stated to be suffering from a higher heart rate. The same was expressed by the IT employee. Six employees, working in the departments of Front Office, Housekeeping, Marketing and IT often find themselves worrying about everyday situations. Lastly, six employees of the Front Office department, two of the Food & Beverage department and one IT employee regularly experience changing moods.

### Conclusion:

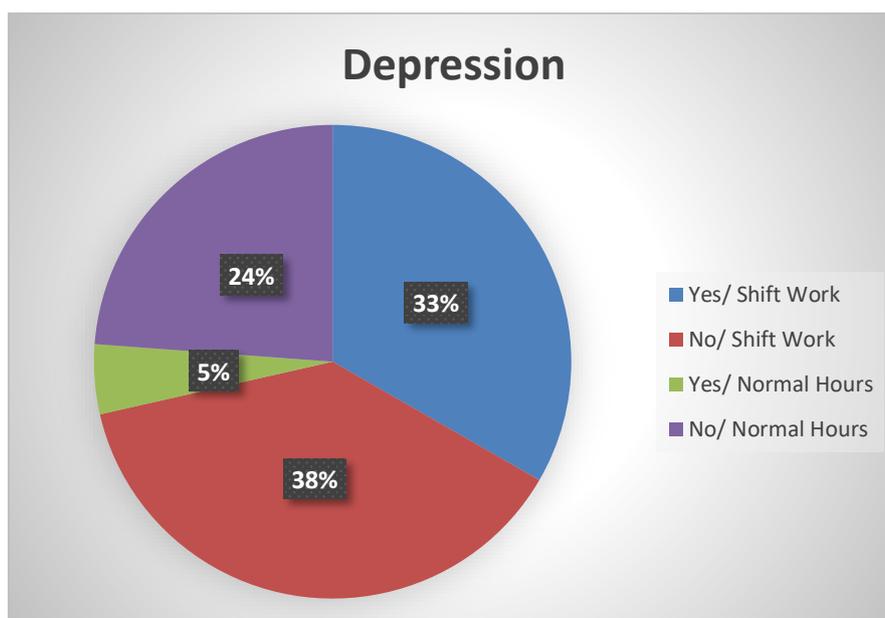
Concluding it can be said that front-line employees, such as receptionists, concierges or waiters believe to be having a stressful job. However, some F&B employees stated not to feel stressed on the job. Furthermore, back of the house employees also regard their job as stressful. They even state to feel currently stressed at work. Solely, Housekeeping employees only slightly consider their job to be stressful. Nevertheless, one housekeeping employee still answered to feel stressed. When it comes to stress-related issues, the front-line staff, as well as back of the house employees appear to be affected. Nevertheless, the opinions of the employees whether they have experience with stress-related issues are divided, as a few of them answered to be disagreeing with this statement. Nonetheless, stress does have an impact on a person's health, as our body reacts to stress by elevating the heart rate, the blood pressure and respiration (Greenberg, 2011; Petreanu et al., 2013). Exhaustion and higher levels stress, due to irregular working hours, are experienced by hotel employees, whereas "Worrying about everyday situations", depersonalization and having a higher heart rate are the least commonly found symptoms in the hotel. A large share of hotel employees also has to deal a lot with being moody, feeling down and often find themselves emotionally distancing themselves from their workplace. Even though all symptoms are experienced by front-line employees, they can also occur for employees working in the back of a hotel. However, it needs to be mentioned that the effect of irregular shifts also depends on the individual (Booker et al., 2017). Needless to say, if not dealt properly with the symptoms being provoked by shift work and stress, it can cause further mental health problems, such as Burnout (Khamisa et al., 2016).

## Depression

Depression	
Front Office Department/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services	5
Food & Beverage	0
Event Operations	1
Housekeeping	1
IT	1
Marketing	0

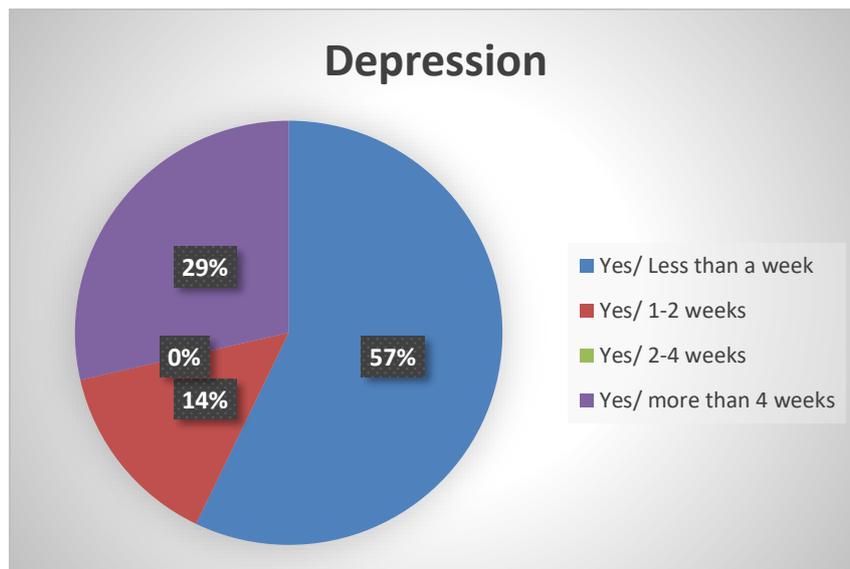
**Table 2: Frequency of Depression in the Departments**

A total of eight people confessed to be suffering from depression. Within this sample, depression was mostly found in the Front Office department with five people confessing to be affected by it. Looking at the other departments, it seems that depression is not as common within these areas of the hotel. Only one person from the departments of event operations, housekeeping and IT have stated to be suffering from depression.



**Figure 9: Association between Depression and Shift Work**

It can be seen in Figure 9 that the majority (38%) of employees, who are currently employed in shift work are not affected by depression. On the contrary, depression is still widespread among employees working in shifts with a total of 33%. 5% of the sample still suffer from depression even though not having to work in shifts. The remaining 24% are not affected by depression and work during normal office hours.



**Figure 10: Association between Depression and Variation of Shifts**

According to Figure 10 more than half of the people affected by depression have a schedule, which changes every week. The second largest share (29%) has to do the same shift for more than four weeks in a row. Only 14% of the employees suffering from depression have a different schedule every week or every two weeks. The value of “Yes/ 2-4 weeks” is not represented in this diagram, as the employees being affected by Depression have either weekly changing schedule or the same schedule for more than four weeks.

**Conclusion:**

Overall, for this sample, it can be said that the development of Depression is not influenced by working in shifts, as employees on never changing schedules also expressed to be affected. However, a large share of the sample still complains about being depressed due to their frequently changing working hours. The irregular sleeping pattern caused by shift work results in a mismatch of the body’s timing system and environmental synchronizers, leading to interrupting the person’s body

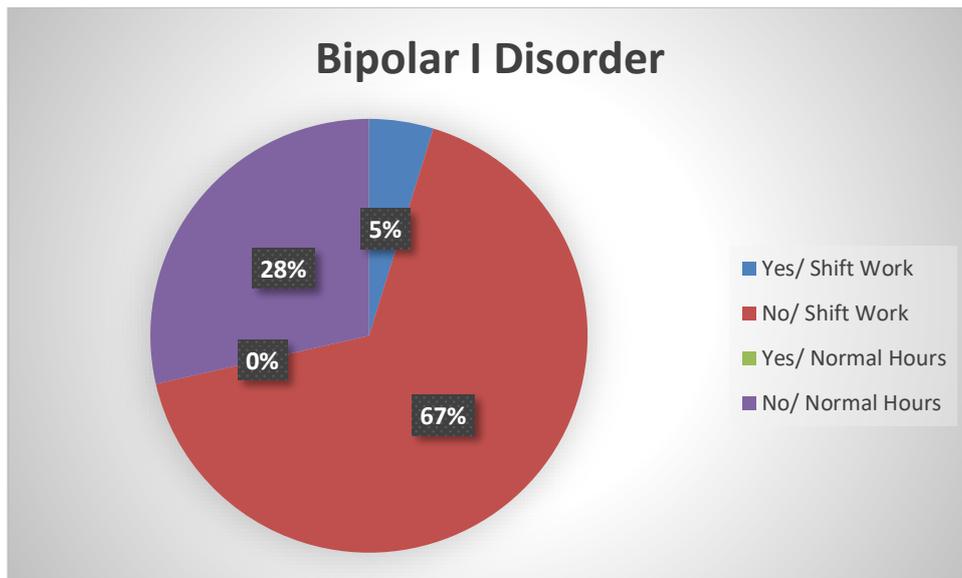
rhythm. Moreover, it needs to be emphasized that the relationship between shift work and depression also depends on the type of shift. For instance, working in fixed night shifts possesses the highest risk for coming down with depression (Moon et al., 2015). It appears that people, who work closely with other people, such as Front Office or Event Operations are the most affected. Nevertheless, Depression is also found in the back of the house departments, like Housekeeping and IT. It is important to mention that shift work is not the only cause of Depression. The mental disorder can also be triggered by stressful events in both the personal, as well as the work life of an employee (Argyle, 1992). Even though, it was not tested which gender is more likely to suffer from depression, it appears that women are more likely to be affected in Austria (Vienna. Bundesministerium für Gesundheit und Frauen, 2017). The same was already stated by Argyle (1992) since women are more likely to seek help rather than suffering.

### **Bipolar I Disorder**

<b>Bipolar I Disorder</b>	
<b>Front Office Department/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Food &amp; Beverage</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Event Operations</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Housekeeping</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>IT</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Marketing</b>	<b>0</b>

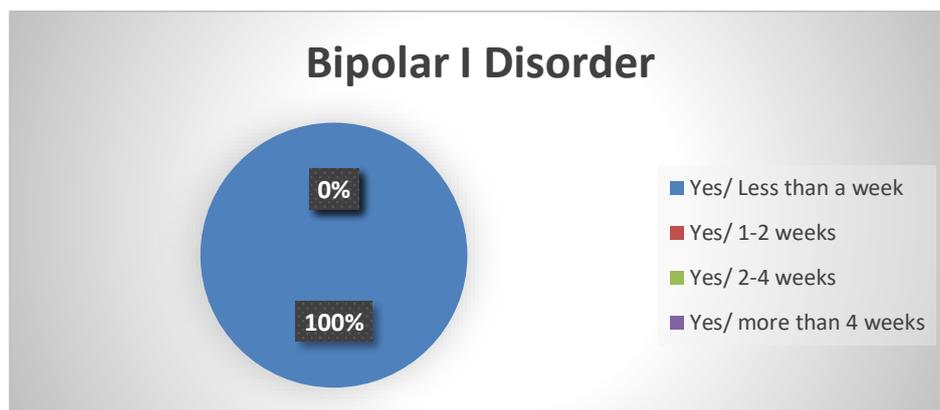
***Table 3: Frequency of Bipolar I Disorder in the Departments***

Solely, one person answered to be affected by Bipolar I Disorder and is currently working in the Front Office department.



**Figure 11: Association between Bipolar I Disorder and Shift Work**

Referring to Figure 11, the only person who has expressed to be suffering from Bipolar I Disorder is required to do shift work in the hotel. Again, the majority of the sample is employed in shift work but are not affected by a Bipolar I Disorder. 28% of the sample work during normal office hours and have not been diagnosed with Bipolar I Disorder. Due to no one else confessing to be dealing with a Bipolar I Disorder, the value of “Yes/ Normal Hours” is set at 0% on the diagram.



**Figure 12: Association between Bipolar I Disorder and Variation of Shifts**

The only person who suffers from Bipolar I Disorder has a schedule that changes every week. Since only one person has experienced Bipolar I Disorder, the other values are not represented in this diagram.

Conclusion:

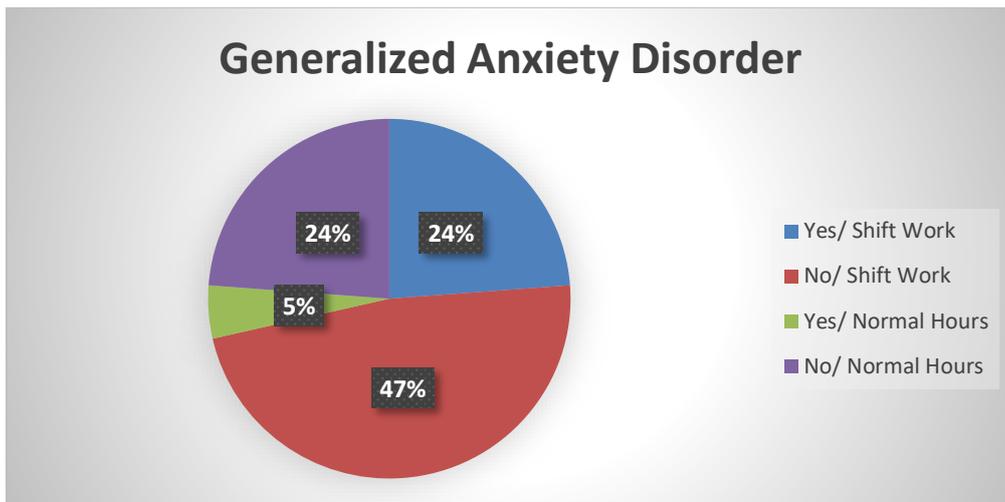
Previous research did not mention the influence of irregular working hours on the development of a Bipolar I Disorder. Therefore, it was expected that a Bipolar I Disorder occurs only rarely or not at all. Since, solely one person confessed to be dealing with being bipolar due to a weekly changing schedule, it is not regarded to be a common effect of a changing working schedule. Nonetheless, diagnoses for Bipolar Disorders have been rising in the past years (Rehm, 2010).

**Generalized Anxiety Disorder**

Generalized Anxiety Disorder	
Front Office Department/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services	4
Food & Beverage	0
Event Operations	0
Housekeeping	1
IT	0
Marketing	1

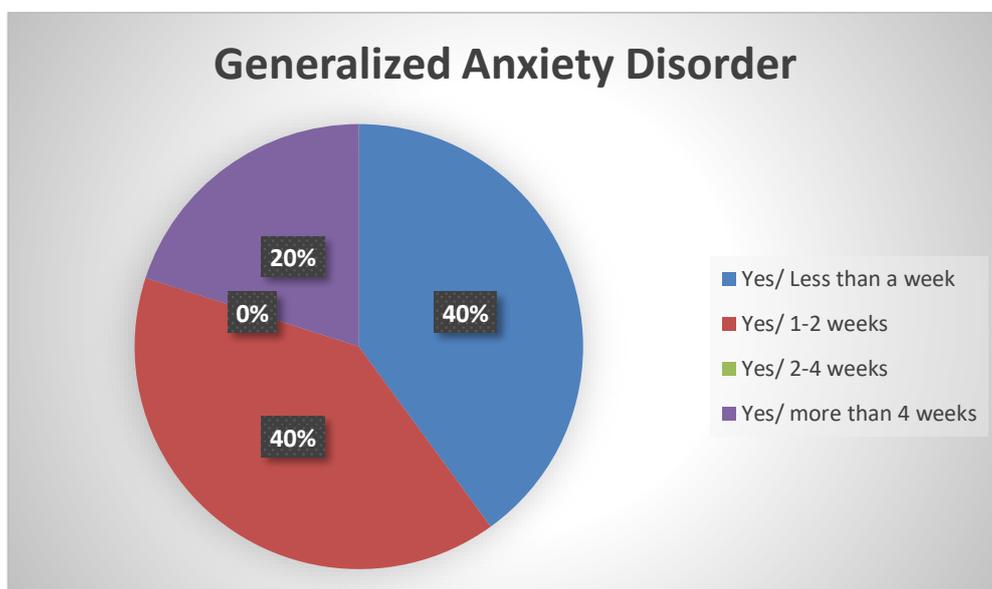
**Table 4: Frequency of GAD in the Departments**

Table 4 shows that a Generalized Anxiety Disorder is most common within the Front Office department, whereas only one employee in the Housekeeping department reported to have been suffering from Generalized Anxiety Disorder. The same can be said for the marketing department. Nevertheless, it needs to be mentioned that the Marketing department does not usually implement the concept of shift work.



**Figure 13: Association between GAD and Shift Work**

The majority of the respondents (47%) are currently employed in shift work but do not suffer from Generalized Anxiety Disorder. However, 24% of the shift working employees stated to be experiencing Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Another 24% revealed to not be experiencing a Generalized Anxiety Disorder and are not required to do shift work. Only 5% expressed to be affected by GAD but do not have to do shift work.



**Figure 14: Association between GAD and Variation of Shifts**

As it can be seen in Figure 14, the two largest shares indicate that people suffering from Generalized Anxiety Disorder have frequently changing schedules, both shares being equally distributed with 40%. The remaining 20% of the employees

experiencing Generalized Anxiety Disorder have the same schedule for more than 4 weeks.

Conclusion:

Since the majority of people, who are required to do shift work, are not affected by a Generalized Anxiety Disorder, it can be indicated that shift work does not contribute to the development of this mental disorder. Nevertheless, a large share of the sample revealed to be dealing with the disorder due to having a frequently changing schedule, with the majority working in the Front Office department. Hence, it can be assumed that employees having to care for others are more prone to a Generalized Anxiety Disorder than people working in the back of the hotel. Nonetheless, employees of the Housekeeping department, as well as of the Marketing department also revealed to be experiencing a Generalized Anxiety Disorder. Since the marketing department usually does not implement the concept of shift work, Anxiety can be caused by a failure at work or a threatening event (Argyle, 1992).

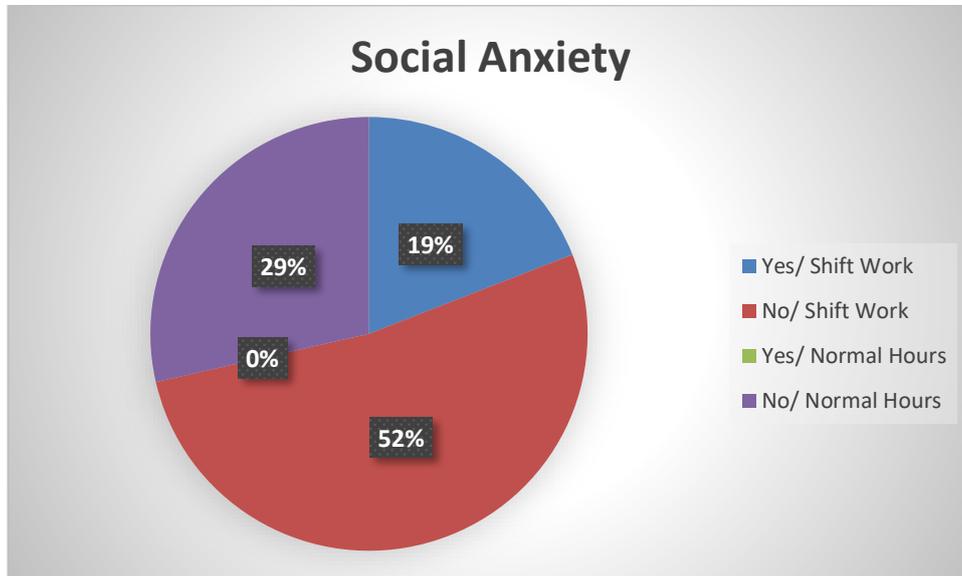
**Social Anxiety**

Social Anxiety	
Front Office Department/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services	3
Food & Beverage	0
Event Operations	0
Housekeeping	1
IT	0
Marketing	0

**Table 5: Frequency of Social Anxiety in the Departments**

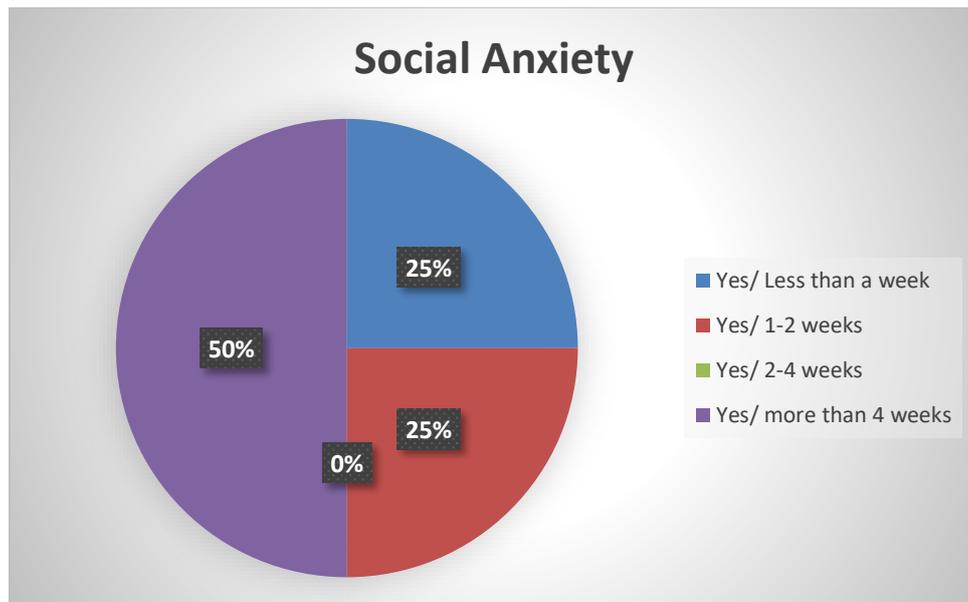
Social Anxiety appears to not be a very common mental health issue in the hotel industry, as only four people have reported to have experienced Social Anxiety. Once again, it can be seen that Front-Office employees are the most affected. At the

same time, one person working in the Housekeeping department has been experiencing Social Anxiety.



**Figure 15: Association between Social Anxiety and Shift Work**

81% of the sample are currently not being affected by Social Anxiety, with 52% of them being currently employed in shift work and the remaining 29% working during the normal hours. The final 19% are affected by Social Anxiety and have to do shift work at the moment. No one, who needs to work during normal business hours, has to deal with Social Anxiety, that is why the value is not represented in the diagram above.



**Figure 16: Association between Social Anxiety and Variation of Shifts**

The majority of employees (50%) suffering from Social Anxiety are currently employed in shift work, having the same schedule for more than four weeks in a row. Another 25% of the affected employees have changing shifts every two weeks. The schedule of the remaining 25% changes weekly.

Conclusion:

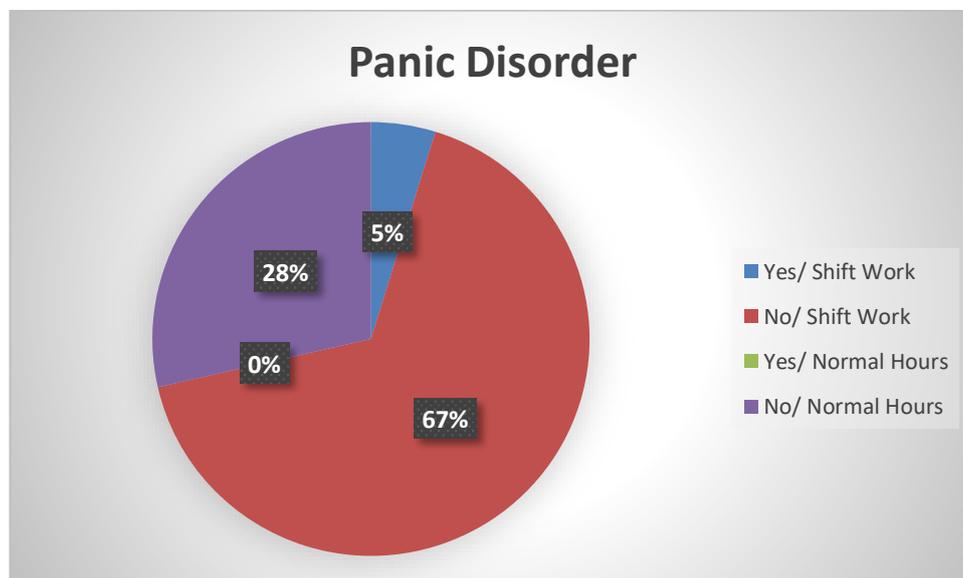
Social Anxiety appears to not be a very common mental health issue in the hotel industry, as only four people have reported to be dealing with Social Anxiety. Once again, it can be seen that Social Anxiety does not arise due to irregular working hours, as the majority of people doing shift work are not affected. Although, the affected people are currently employed in shift work, their schedules mainly do not change weekly but every four weeks. Social Anxiety mainly occurs in the Front Office department but can also be detected among people working in Housekeeping.

## Panic Disorder

Panic Disorder	
Front Office Department/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services	0
Food & Beverage	0
Event Operations	0
Housekeeping	1
IT	0
Marketing	0

**Table 6: Frequency of Panic Disorder in the Departments**

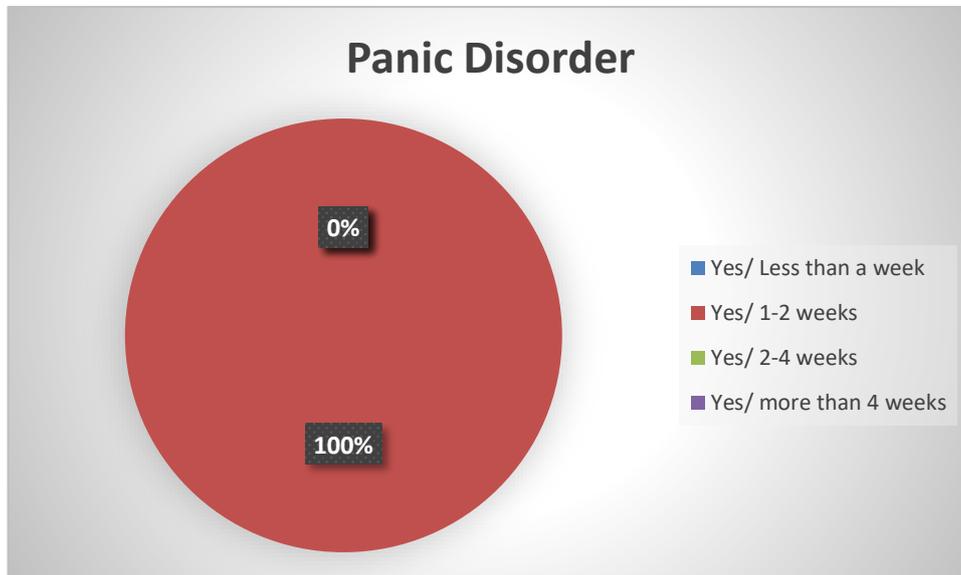
Only one person of the survey respondents has answered to suffer from a Panic Disorder. Moreover, this person is currently working in the Housekeeping department of a hotel.



**Figure 17: Association between Panic Disorder and Shift Work**

Figure 17 shows that the minority of people (5%) having to do shift work experience a Panic Disorder, whereas the majority (67%) of people working in shifts answered to be not affected by the mental disorder. The second largest share of the sample

work during the normal hours and have not experienced a Panic Disorder. Nobody working at normal hours is affected by a Panic Disorder, therefore the value is not represented in this diagram.



**Figure 18: Association between Panic Disorder and Variation of Shifts**

Furthermore, the schedule of the only person, who is affected by a Panic Disorder changes either weekly or every two weeks. Since only one person answered to be dealing with a Panic Disorder, the remaining values are not shown in this diagram.

Conclusion:

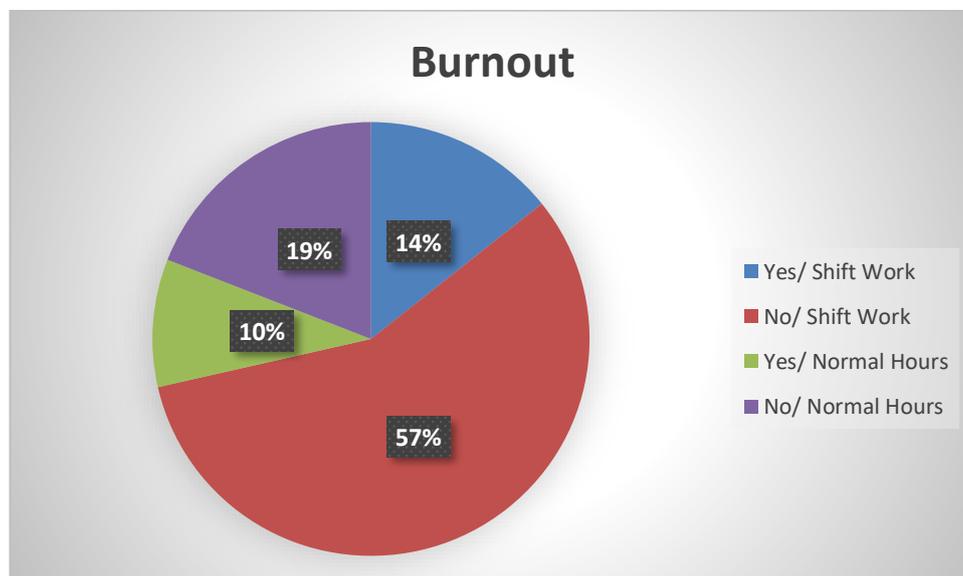
Solely one person of the sample has answered to suffer from a Panic Disorder. Hence, it can be indicated that Panic Disorders are very rare in the hotel industry. Nevertheless, the person is currently required to do shift work with a frequently changing schedule, so it could be assumed that a Panic Disorder arises due to irregular working hours. Furthermore, the person does not work in the front of a hotel, thus no prediction on whether front-line employees are also affected can be made.

## Burnout

Burnout	
Front Office Department/ Guest Relations/ Guest Services	5
Food & Beverage	0
Event Operations	0
Housekeeping	0
IT	0
Marketing	0

**Table 7: Frequency of Burnout in the Departments**

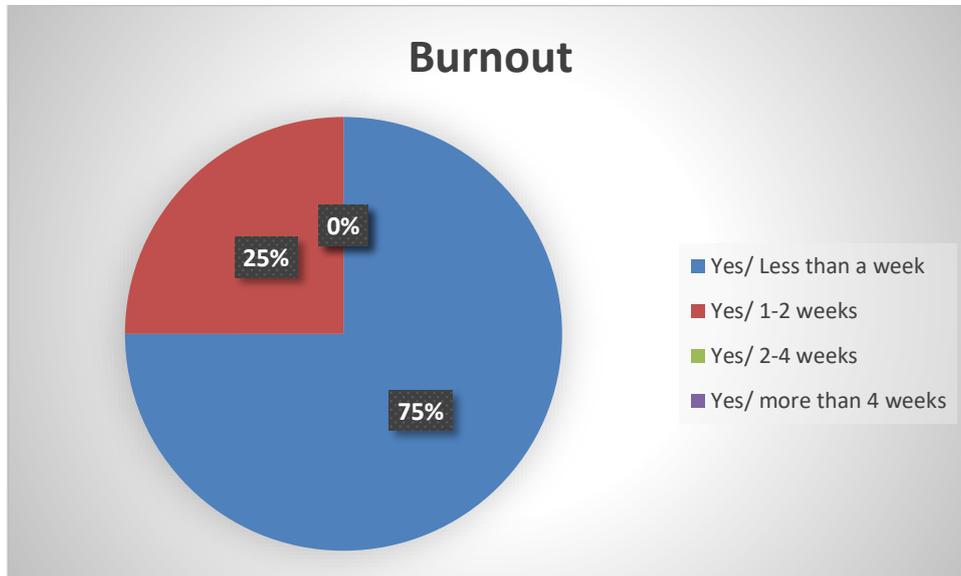
5 out of 23 people have answered to have dealt with Burnout at least once during their career. All five people are currently working in the Front Office department of a hotel.



**Figure 19: Association between Burnout and Shift Work**

As it can be seen in Figure 19, the largest share of the sample (57%) is not affected by Burnout but do however work in shifts. The second largest share (19%) is also not affected by Burnout and do not have to do shift work. 14%, however, are required to

do shift work and have been experiencing Burnout during their career. Only 10% stated to be affected by Burnout but work during the normal business hours.



**Figure 20: Association between Burnout and Variation of Shifts**

Three of the five people being affected by Burnout have a schedule, which changes weekly. Another person works on a schedule that changes either weekly or every two weeks. The last person, however, did state to be working on a schedule but did not provide an answer on how frequently the schedule changes. None of the people suffering from Burnout have schedule changing every two to four weeks or have the same schedule for more than four weeks, thus these values are not represented in the diagram.

**Conclusion:**

Even though, the Burnout rate in the hospitality industry is the highest among the other industries (Lederer et al., 2016), only 5 out of the 23 respondents answered to have experienced Burnout during their career. Maslach & Jackson (1981) proposed that front-line employees are more prone to Burnout due to working closely with other people. This argument can be confirmed since the affected people all work in the Front Office department of a hotel. Additionally, front-line employees often face heavy workloads, which can be further triggers of Burnout (Cheng & O-Yang, 2018). Furthermore, it can be pointed out that Burnout can be influenced by irregular shifts, as the schedules of the respondents change quite frequently. Thus, the

statement of Lederer et al. (2016) saying, that hospitality employees are more prone towards Burnout due to their working hours can be confirmed. Nevertheless, Burnout does not only affect people with a changing schedule but also employees working during normal office hours. For instance, being dissatisfied with one’s job may also contribute to the development of Burnout (Györfy et al., 2016). Some other factors causing Burnout can be job overload, lack of feedback or pressure (Maslach et al., 2001). Furthermore, if Burnout is not treated properly, the affected person may be more vulnerable to other mental health problems (Maslach et al., 2001).

#### 4.2 Interview Partners and Interpretation of the Interviews

The table below introduces the two interview partners in terms of their position, how long they have been working as an HR manager and their experience with HR management. As the interview partners were informed that all names mentioned during the interview will be anonymised, the researcher will refer to them as “Interview Partner 1” and “Interview Partner 2”.

Name	Occupation	Duration of working as an HR Manager	Years of Experience in the area of HR
<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Human Resource Manager, Hotel Sacher Wien	1 Year	> 15 years
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	Human Resource Manager, Hotel Sans Souci	2 Years	2 years

**Table 8: Interview Partners**

As it can be seen above, both of the interviewees are currently in charge of the Human Resources department in the Hotel Sacher Wien and the Hotel Sans Souci. Both interviewees have been working as an HR Manager for one to two years, whereby Interviewee 1 already has experience in the area of HR for more than 15 years. However, Interviewee 2 did a specialization in Human Resource Management during her master study and handled some HR related topics during her previous occupation as the executive assistant to the General Manager of Hotel Sans Souci.

The Subjective Theory of Stress:

**What comes to your mind when you hear the term stress?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Something like workload but not only the workload at work but also maybe at home, children or other family members who need special care.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	Stress could be different things. On the one hand that there are too many tasks which you have to do. On the other side it could be stress because of a stressful situation where a person standing in front of you wants something which you cannot handle.

Both interviewees define stress as a situation in which a person takes on too many things at the same time. Besides people taking on too many tasks, both interviewees think that guests or family members who have special wishes or need special care keep an employee running for things he/ she cannot handle can be defined as a stressful situation.

**What are some things that are likely to contribute to a high amount of stress?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Taking on too many things at the same time that you are not able to say "no" in between. If you have very special guests who keep you running for a lot of things. Or if you have a lot of people who are sick in your area of work and you and then you get a higher workload because you have to compensate.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	Too many tasks on the one side and on the other side guest wishes in the hospitality industry.

Too many tasks at the same time and special wishes from guests are some factors, which are likely to contribute a higher amount of stress stated by both interview partners. Interviewee 1 also perceives if there are a lot of sick leaves within the area

the employee works in and hence needs to compensate the lack of employees lead to a higher stress level.

**How much do you think does stress impact the employee’s performance on the job?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	It does impact them quite a lot. You will lose your joy, your engagement for working. It is not fun for you anymore and it becomes a burden.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	A lot because if it's an overwhelming situation they can't think properly, and they cannot solve any problems properly. They do a lot of mistakes.

According to the interview partners, stress does impact an employee a lot on the job, as they are not able to solve problems in the way they should and are more prone to do mistakes than when they are less stressed. Furthermore, the employee perceives the job to be a burden and lose their motivation for the job.

**Do you think it is important to promote a good mental health at the workplace?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Yes.
----------------------------	------

Interview Partner 1 agrees with the statement that it is important to promote a good mental health at the workplace.

**In your personal opinion do you believe that front-line employees are more stressed due to the amount of time dealing with other people?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	I don't actually. I find it very rewarding to be a front-line employee because you get positive feedback straight away. I mean you do get the negative one as well, but you have both
----------------------------	---

	sides, so I don't think your stress level is that much higher than for someone working in an office.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	They have a different level of stress. Due to the people they have more stress because [...] a guest is always the priority. And if there is a lot of guests you have to handle all of them at the same time which is just not possible.

The opinions of the interview partners were divided on this question. Interview Partner 1 expressed that being a front-line employee is a rewarding task, as employees working in the front get feedback from guests right away. Interview Partner 2, however, stated that front-line employees have a different kind of stress than people working in the back of the hotel. She explained that a guest is always the priority in the hotel and if there are a lot of guests at the same time, the employee cannot handle all of them.

Conclusion:

To conclude the first set of questions, stress is a situation in which an employee takes on too many tasks at the same time. The same was proposed by Chiang, Birtch and Kwan (2010), as it was stated in their paper that high demand from guests is one of the most commonly reported causes of stress in the hotel. It can be said that stress impacts employees on the job as they cannot handle stressful situations properly anymore. Additionally, employees will lose their motivation for doing the job and will make more mistakes. Shani and Pizam (2009) confirm the argument saying that employees affected by stress are less concentrated, have a poorer time management and cannot think clearly. Many front-line employees perceive their job as insulting or humiliating as they often need to face demanding or even rude guests (Shani & Pizam, 2009). Since guests are the main target group of a hotel, it is safe to say that guests are always the priority in the daily business. For instance, if all guests have inquiries at the same time, it will become impossible for the employee to deal with all the guests at once. On the contrary, it can be argued that being a front-line

employee is a rewarding position, since guests will give feedback towards the employees right away.

The Subjective Theory of Mental Health:

**What do you link the word “Mental Health” to?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	It influences the physical health. Depression, anxiety and [...] Burnout I would say I link that to mental health.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	Mental health is not only stress. But also, if you have depression or any kind of anxiety like that. That could be mental health.

When asking both interviewees about their perception of mental health, both linked the diseases depression and any kind of anxiety disorder to mental health. The first interview partner also proposed that mental health influences the physical health of a person, whereas the second interview partner says that stress is an additional part of mental health.

**What is your opinion about the relationship between a poor mental health and the service outcome of employees?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	I believe that in the service that the employee will not be able to serve properly. [...] It will become very difficult and for us here in the hotel it is very important that employees show a lot empathy towards our guests and that is not possible if you feel mentally ill [...].
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	You just can handle problems better when you're in a better mood and a better mental health state.

Concerning the relationship between a poor mental health state and the service outcome of an employee, both of the interview partners stated that employees with a poor mental health cannot deal with problems in the same way than when being

mentally healthy. Moreover, the first interview partner explained that in a hotel it is very important to show positive emotions towards the guest at all times, hence it will become difficult for the employee to execute tasks properly.

**Do you believe that the statement that “front-line employees are more prone to mental health problems than people working in the back of a hotel”?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	No. [...] I don't believe it's different enough
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	No. Also for housekeeping employees it can be stressful because they don't have a direct contact with the guest. They are not really front-line, but they know until 3pm they have to do all the rooms.

Both of the interview partners do not believe that front-line employees, such as waiters and receptionists are more prone to mental health problems than hotel employees working in the back of the hotel. Furthermore, the second interview partner gave the example of the housekeeping personnel, as they can also encounter stressful situations due to cleaning a set amount of rooms within a specific timeframe.

Conclusion:

To summarize these set of questions, mental health is generally often linked to depression, anxiety disorders, and burnout. Burnout counts to the greatest occupational hazards at the workplace (Cheng & O-Yang, 2015). In the hotel industry, a poor mental health influences the service outcome of an employee. However, not only front-line employees are at the risk of experiencing a mental health problem but also employees working in the back of the hotel, such as housekeeping employees. On the contrary, Maslach and Jackson (1981) argue that people in human services are more prone to burnout due to the amount of time spent dealing with other people. Even though, hotel employees are always required to show positive emotions towards the guests (Hofman et al., (2017), it cannot be

said that front-line employees are more affected than the back of the house employees. However, if employees are affected by a mental disorder, they face difficulties in terms of concentration, clear thinking and working in teams (Shani & Pizam, 2009).

Stress and Mental Health in the Hotel:

**Do you think it is important to promote a good mental health at the workplace?**

<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	Definitely.
----------------------------	-------------

When being asked about the importance of promoting a good mental health at the workplace, the second interview partner agreed to this statement.

**Does your hotel provide any trainings regarding time management and living a healthy life?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Yes, we do. We have the so-called summer school of excellence. Where we have over 150 different trainings for our employees [...] but also for time management. [...] Or for example, mindfulness [...]. We do have fitness checks. Physiotherapy and then also the prevention of stress for line-managers and also for apprentices.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	We do work with a doctor. [...] He is also doing some classes. On the one hand side that could be how you carry things properly but also about sleep management, time management. It always depends a little bit where people really have a need at the moment.

Both hotels offer a time management training for their employees. In addition to the time management, the hotel of the second interview partner also offers a sleep management training for their employees. But the second interview partner

emphasized that they try to come up with trainings which are currently needed by the employees. Interview partner 2 expressed that the hotel is working with a doctor, who is responsible for teaching some of the trainings. Simultaneously, the hotel of the first interview partner provides fitness checks to its employees as well as trainings on how to prevent stress for not only line managers but also apprentices. This distinction is being done because apprentices may believe different situations to be stressful as they do not have the same job experiences as line managers.

**If yes, could you briefly describe the content that is being taught in these trainings?**

<p><b>Interview Partner 1</b></p>	<p>[..] the time management [..] you have to divide your day into the right period. Especially those who are working in offices don't make too many appointments. [...] For the other employees in the front how they have possibilities to do similar things even though they have their guests. [...] Regarding the fitness check and the physiotherapy both these are done from an external trainer as well. [...] The fitness check is all about your blood pressure, your heart rate and then of course how your muscles are working [..] and physiotherapy is very personal, depending on what part of or, area in the hotel you are working in.</p>
<p><b>Interview Partner 2</b></p>	<p>We haven't had the training yet. [...] At the beginning of each year we just have a quick chat together what we are going to do.</p>

In regard to the content being taught in these trainings, the second interview partner could not give an answer to this question, as they have not had these trainings, yet. However, interview partner 2 express that the hotel engages in discussions with the hired doctor to give ideas for the offered trainings and classes. Concerning the time management, interview partner 1 explains that employees are trained to divide their day into periods in which certain things should be done. This training is offered to front-line employees and employees working in the back. The fitness check and the physiotherapy are done by an external fitness trainer. During the fitness check the employee's blood pressure, heart rate and, muscle are being

tested. The physiotherapy, on the other side, is very personal and mostly concerned with the employee's needs.

**To what extent does this hotel promote a good work-life balance?**

<p><b>Interview Partner 1</b></p>	<p>It should be a goal for every employee. [...] It is something that is going to be more and more important over the years. Like until now it was hospitality industry where you have to work at least 40 hours a week. But our time is getting more and more important and that makes it easier for us then to get a better work-life balance as long as the payment is still right. [...] We need to promote it a lot more but can't do it at the level we're standing at the moment because the guest is actually just the most important part of the job. Without the guest we wouldn't be here. So, we still have to find a good way to get the work-life balance in a better balance.</p>
<p><b>Interview Partner 2</b></p>	<p>For me it should be more like work life integration. But still you have to integrate it because you really spend a lot of time at work so there must be integration. It is hard if you are working on a schedule.</p>

Work-life balance is becoming more and more important over the years, so we need to promote it a lot more, according to interview partner 1. On the other side, interview partner 2 states that it is important to integrate work into life rather than balancing both at the same time. However, it is hard to do so if someone is working on a schedule. Especially in the hotel industry, an employee is required to work at least 40 hours a week, which makes balancing life and work not easy.

**What kind of coping strategies do you propose to your employees in case of dealing with extreme stress at work?**

<p><b>Interview Partner 1</b></p>	<p>Well we hopefully do learn about that before they really fall ill because that's the first thing that hopefully the managers will be</p>
-----------------------------------	---

	informed by the employees about what is going on. [...]. And we also have our company physician or doctor.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	We do send them to stress classes. A good strategy is especially when you're wearing a uniform that you just keep in mind whenever you take of your uniform you can leave your stress [...].

Interview partner 1 answered that the department's manager prefers to know as soon as possible when an employee believes to be under a lot of stress. The employee can also talk to the company's doctor or physician. The second interview partner replied that stressed employees attend stress classes. Furthermore, the interview partner explained that a good strategy to cope with stress is to leave the stress at the workplace and forget about it as soon as the person changes from his/her uniform to his/ her personal clothes after being done with work.

**Do affected employees have the option to talk to someone here in the hotel when they believe to deal with a high amount of stress and cannot cope anymore?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	[...] They can talk to the company doctor anytime. [...] And the hotel director is here for anyone to talk to [...] We do try and get our managers to be part of their team and therefore listen to what the employees have to say and that they feel that they can really talk to them.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	Yes, either they come to me or they can have a chat with a doctor as well.

Both of the interview partners stated that employees affected by stress can talk to the company doctor. Additionally, the second interview partner offers the employees to approach her when feeling stressed. Compared to interview partner 2, interview partner 1 did not mention the option of talking to someone in the HR department but emphasized that the hotel tries to get the departments' managers

to be part of their team, so that employees can approach them whenever they encounter problems or stress at the workplace.

**What happens in case of an employee suffering from a severe mental health issue, such as depression or anxiety?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Our doctor. She helps them really and makes appointments with therapists and so on. Whatever the employee then needs.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	[...] is a lot on sick leave. And of course, we support her. [...] gave her addresses from different kind of psychologists, doctors [...].

Whenever an employee is suffering from a mental health issue, the hotels have different ways to deal with them. Interview partner 1 refers the affected employee to the company doctor, who will then arrange appointments with therapists. Additionally, the hotel tries to help the affected employees as good as they can by supporting them in whatever they need. According to the second interview partner, affected employees have the opportunity to go on sick leave. Moreover, the hotel issues contact details of psychologists and doctors to the employee. Interview partner 1, however, expresses that they rather avoid sending employees on sick leave.

**Are you offering any sports activities in which employees can participate outside the hotel?**

<b>Interview Partner 1</b>	Soon to come. [...] We will have our own health and prevention scheme that we want to implement in the hotel. We will have a trainer who would like two times a week at different times and will then have employees outside the hotel to do some training with them and hopefully we will have a fitness centre with which we can then go for it.
<b>Interview Partner 2</b>	We have a football club. [...] We tried that with Pilates classes once because one of our employees was a Pilates teacher.

Both of the hotels do not really offer any sports activities for the employees at the moment. However, the first interview partner said that they are currently trying to come up with a health and prevention concept, including a fitness trainer who will do sports with the employees twice a week.

#### Conclusion:

Promoting a good mental health at the workplace is an important topic to be considered at work. Additionally, the departments' managers should be well integrated into their team, so that employees feel they can trust their manager and they are easy to talk to. In terms of stress prevention techniques, time management trainings seem to be the most implemented trainings in a hotel. During these trainings, employees are trained to divide their working day or shift into different periods in which then certain tasks need to be done. This training was also suggested by Greenberg (2011) as a way to diminish the impact of stress on the employees. In some cases, hotels work together with doctors, who regularly check the employees' health. Although, the doctor mainly focuses on testing the employees' body functions, such as blood pressure, heart rate or muscles, some doctors do some trainings regarding stress or sleep management with the employees. Though, the doctors engage in meetings with the Human Resource department in order to determine the topics and content for the trainings. These trainings may differ in the subjects taught, depending on the position of the employees. Moreover, the doctor should also serve as a contact person, which employees can approach when dealing with a high amount of stress. The doctor will refer the affected employee to psychologists, or the affected employee is sent to internal stress classes. In case of an employee suffering from a mental disorder, hotels rather avoid sending them on sick leave, as other people will need to compensate for the loss. Since employees in the hotel industry are required to work 40 hours a week, it is getting difficult to balance life and work, but nowadays work-life balance is something that is becoming more and more important in our society. Therefore, it is essential to integrate work into someone's rhythm of life, as this leads to lower stress levels (Karkoulian et al., 2016). Some researchers propose sports activities as a coping strategy for stress, since sports activities relieve stress and the symptoms of depression or anxiety

(Kassymova, 2018). However, organizing community activities in which everyone can participate can be hard in the hotel business as some employees always have to work to take care of the guests.

## 5 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the influences of irregular shifts on the stress levels and mental health state of hotel employees. In addition to that, the study was directed to identify coping strategies offered by Viennese hotels to help their employees dealing with stress and mental health issues. To recall, the researcher developed a hypothesis to be researched:

*H1: Irregular shifts have a negative impact on stress levels and the human psyche.*

Stress, depression and anxiety disorders have considerably increased in the hotel industry. These issues can arise, due to the hotel industry being a very labour-intensive industry, including long working hours, demanding customers and heavy workload. Furthermore, Burnout nowadays counts as one of the greatest occupational hazards. Stress seems to be experienced by both front-line employees and back of the house employees. Needless to say, stress can have a negative impact on a person's health. Stress can result through various factors, but since this study aimed to investigate the influence of shift work on stress levels, it can be said that irregular working schedules have a negative impact on the stress levels of hotel employees. Some other commonly found symptoms, caused by shift work are:

- Exhaustion
- Higher stress levels
- Mood swings
- Feeling down most of the time

Previous research has already identified a relationship between shift work and depression. Even though, the current research showed no association between shift work and depression, a large share of the sample still complained about being affected by Depression. Depression seems to be most commonly found in departments, which have a constant direct contact with guests. Since existing research did not touch upon the influence of shift work on the development of a Bipolar I Disorder, this research reveals that shift work could have an influence on Bipolar I Disorder. However, there is still a growing need for research identifying the impact of shift work on this type of mental disorder. In spite of this sample not

showing any relationship between shift work and any kind of Anxiety disorder, such as a Generalized Anxiety disorder or Social Anxiety, a large share still confessed to be dealing with these mental health problems arising from shift work. Furthermore, it needs to be said that Generalized Anxiety disorder is more regularly found than Social Anxiety. Panic Disorders, on the other hand are very rare in the hotel industry but may be influenced due to an irregular working schedule. Regarding the problem of Burnout, this research proves that front-line employees are more affected, as the constant contact with other people also contributes to the development of Burnout. Moreover, the research revealed that Burnout can be influenced by having an irregular working schedule, but that does not mean that people with a stable schedule are not affected.

The findings indicate a partial verification of the hypothesis, as stress levels are influenced by the irregular working hours. However, the current research only showed some association between shift work and mental health problems. That is why there remains a growing need for research in this field in order to investigate other mental health problems associated with shift work.

The second part of the thesis aimed to find out if Viennese hotels offer coping strategies or trainings regarding stress or mental health issues. The conducted interviews revealed:

- Viennese hotels often work closely together with doctors, who serve as an expert in terms of diagnosing and treating health problems. Additionally, the doctor acts as an intermediary between the patient and other psychologists by organizing appointments or issuing the necessary contact details to the patient.
- In some cases, the doctors also give trainings at the hotel by addressing health issues, which have been previously identified by the Human Resource department or the employees.
- Stress management trainings are the most implemented types of trainings, which should prevent stress from spreading among the employees.
- To avoid that employees have too much stress, department heads should be well integrated into their team. This will also make it easier for their

employees to approach them whenever they feel like facing too many difficulties in their life, which could lead to stress or even a mental health problem.

- Having a balanced work-life balance is very difficult to obtain when working in the hotel industry, as it is a very labor-intensive industry. Additionally, employees, who are required to do shift work, are unable to spend sufficient time with their family, which is an important factor for having a good work-life balance.
- Sports activities seem to alleviate the symptoms of stress. Hence, it is important for hotels to offer or at least promote sports activities. Viennese hotels already work on providing their employees with sports activities in which they can take part in whether it is in the hotel itself or working together with a gym.

Generally, it needs to be emphasized that the degree of transparency for mental health problems in the hotel industry is very low. Various hotels were contacted to take part in the research, but only two agreed to participate. These difficulties might be due to the stigma that is wide spread about mental health problems. Additionally, it is still often avoided to talk about mental disorder in today's society. Furthermore, due to the short amount of time only a small sample could be achieved, showing a surplus of respondents working in the Front Office. Even though, the researcher has tried to generalise the findings, it does not mean that they apply to all departments of a hotel.

## Bibliography

Abbott, M. J. & Rapee, R. M. (2004). Post-event rumination and negative self-appraisal in social phobia before and after treatment. *Journal of abnormal psychology*, 113(1). 136-144. doi: 10.1037/0021-843X.113.1.136

Adame-Sánchez, C., González-Cruz, T. F., & Martínez-Fuentes, C. (2016). Do firms implement work-life balance policies to benefit their workers or themselves. *Journal of business research*, 69(2016), 5519-5523. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.164>

Al-Sowygh, Z. H. (2013). Academic distress, perceived stress and coping strategies among dental students in Saudi Arabia. *The Saudi dental journey*, 25(2013), 97-105. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sdentj.2013.05.002>

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Major depressive disorder and the bereavement exclusion [Fact Sheet]. Retrieved from: [www.psychiatry.org](http://www.psychiatry.org)

American Psychiatric Association. (n.d.). *What are anxiety disorders?* Retrieved from: <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/anxiety-disorders/what-are-anxiety-disorders>

AMS Malicse-Somoray (2014). *Major departments of a five-star hotel* [Image.] Retrieved from: <https://www.slideshare.net/beansomoray/hotel-departments-38239421>

Antony, M. M., & Rowa, K. (2008). *Social anxiety disorder*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Hogrefe

Publishing.

Argyle, M. (1992). *The social psychology of everyday life*. London, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Ariza-Montes, A., Arjona-Fuentes, J. M., Han, H. & Law, R. (2018). Work environment and well-being of different occupational groups in hospitality: job demand-control-support model. *International journal of hospitality management*, 73(2018), 1-11. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.01.010>

Armstrong, M. (2010). *Armstrong's essential human resource management practice: A guide to people management*. London, United Kingdom: Kogan Page Limited.

Australian Human Rights Commission. (2010). *Workers with mental illness: a practical guide for managers*. Retrieved from: [www.humanrights.gov.au/disability\\_rights/publications/workers\\_mental\\_illness\\_guide.html](http://www.humanrights.gov.au/disability_rights/publications/workers_mental_illness_guide.html)

Austrian Professional Hotel Association. (2017). Hotel classification procedure 2015-2020 [Information]. Retrieved from: <https://www.wko.at/site/hotelsterne/Hotelklassifizierung-2015-2020.html>

Babbie, E. R. (2013). *The basics of social research*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Barrows, C. W., Powers, T., & Reynolds, D. (2012). *Introduction to management in the hospitality industry*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Booker, L. A., Magee, M., Rajaratnam, S. M. W., Sletten, T. L., & Howard, M. E. (2017). Individual vulnerability to insomnia, excessive sleepiness and shift work disorder amongst healthcare shift workers: a systematic review. *Sleep medicine reviews*, 41(2018), 220-233. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2018.03.005>

Brown, L. A., LeBeau, R., Liao, B., Niles, A. N., Glenn, D., & Craske, M. G. (2015). A comparison of the nature and correlates of panic attacks in the context of panic disorder and social anxiety disorder. *Psychiatry research*, 235(2016), 69-76. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2015.11.048>

Bubonya, M., Cobb-Clark, D. A., & Wooden, M. (2017). Mental health and productivity at work: does what you do matter?. *Labour economics*, 46(2017), 150-165. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.labeco.2017.05.001>

Bundesgesetz vom 11. Dezember 1969 über die Regelung der Arbeitszeit (Arbeitsgesetz) (AZG) StF. BGB1 Nr. 461/1969

Cheng, J. C. & O-Yang, Y. (2018). Hotel employee job crafting, burnout, and satisfaction: The moderating role of perceived organizational support. *International*

*journal of hospitality management*, 72(2018), 78-85.  
doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.01.005>

Chia, Y.M. & Chu, M.J.T. (2016). Moderating effects of presenteeism on the stress-happiness relationship of hotel employees: A note. *International journal of hospitality management*, 55(2016), 52-56.  
doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2016.02.005>

Chiang, F. F. T., Birtch, T. A. & Kwan, H. K. (2010). The moderating roles of job control and work-life balance practices on employee stress in the hotel and catering industry. *International journal of hospitality management*, 29(2010), 25-32. doi: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2009.04.005

CIPD. (2018). *People managers' guide to mental health*. Retrieved from: [https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/mental-health-at-work-1\\_tcm18-10567.pdf](https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/mental-health-at-work-1_tcm18-10567.pdf)

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.

Davey, G.C.L. (2013). Mental health & stigma. Retrieved from: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/why-we-worry/201308/mental-health-stigma>

Davis, J.W. & O'Neill, K. (2010). Work stress and well-being in the hotel industry. *International journal of hospitality management*, 30(2), 385-390.  
doi: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2010.07.007

Doorman, C. & Zapf, D. (1999). Social support, social stressors at work, and depressive symptoms: Testing for main and moderating effects with structural equations in a three-wave longitudinal study. *Journal of applied psychology*, 84(6), 874-884. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.84.6.874>

Doyle, A. (2018). *Hospitality industry job titles and descriptions*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/hospitality-job-titles-2061496>

European Communities. (2009). *Reconciliation between work, private and family life in the European Union*. Luxembourg: Office for official publications of the European

communities. Retrieved from: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/de/web/products-statistical-books/-/KS-78-09-908>

European Union. (2010). *Health and safety at work in Europe (1999-2007)*. Luxembourg: Publications office of the European Union.

Gamor, E., Amisshah, E. F., & Boakye, K. A. A. (2014). Work-family conflict among hotel employees in Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolis, Ghana. *Tourism management perspectives*, 12(2014), 1-8. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2014.06.001>

Gartlgruber, M., Gartlgruber, H., Gutmayer, W., Lenger, H., Lenger, R., Siegel, L., Siegel, S. & Stickler, H. (2005). *Service: A guide for professionals* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Linz: Trauner Verlag.

Gerrig, R.J. (2014). *Psychology and life*. Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited.

Gill, P. Stewart, K., Treasure, E., & Chadwick, B. (2008). Methods of data collection in qualitative research: Interviews and focus groups. *British dental journal*, 204(6), 291-295. doi: 10.1038/bdj.2008.192

Goh, E. & Lee, C. (2018). A workforce to be reckoned with: The merging pivotal generation Z hospitality workforce. *International journal of hospitality management*, 73(2018), 20-28. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.01.016>

Greenberg, J. (2011). *Behavior in Organization*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Grow, M. (2013). Exactly why is hospitality such risky business? Hospitality Magazine. Retrieved from: <https://www.hospitalitymagazine.com.au/exactly-why-is-hospitality-such-risky-business/>

Györffy, Z., Dweik, D. & Girasek, E., (2016). Workload, mental health and burnout indicators among physicians. *Human resources for health*, 14(12), 1-10. doi: 10.1186/s12960-016-0108-9

Hair, J.F., Wolfenbarger-Celsi, M., Ortinau, D.J. & Bush, R.P. (2013). *Essentials of Marketing Research*. (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). New York, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hayes, T. A. (2007). *Professional front office management*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.

Heathfield, S. M. (2018, October 18). Shift work and the employees who work shifts. *The Balance Careers*. Retrieved from: <https://www.thebalancecareers.com/shift-work-1918258>

Hofman, V. & Stokburger-Sauer, N. E. (2017). The impact of emotional labor on employees' work-life balance perception and commitment: A study in the hospitality industry. *International journal of hospitality management*, 65(2017), 47-58. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2017.06.003>

*How the hotel industry is embracing flexible working*. (n.d.) Retrieved from: <https://www.caterer.com/careers-advice/flexible-working/hotel-industry-embraces-flexible-working>

Hulsegge, G., Gupta, N., Proper, K. L., van Lobenstein, N., Ijzelenberg, W., Hallman, D. M., Holterman, A., & van der Beek, A. J. (2018). Shift work is associated with reduced heart rate variability among men but not women. *International journal of cardiology*, 258(2018), 109-114. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijcard.2018.01.089>

Ibec. (2016). Mental health and wellbeing: A line manager's guide. Retrieved from: [https://www.ibec.ie/IBEC/ES.nsf/vPages/HR\\_best\\_practice~Diversity\\_and\\_the\\_integrated\\_workplace~mental-health-and-wellbeing-a-line-manager%27s-guide-05-10-2012?OpenDocument](https://www.ibec.ie/IBEC/ES.nsf/vPages/HR_best_practice~Diversity_and_the_integrated_workplace~mental-health-and-wellbeing-a-line-manager%27s-guide-05-10-2012?OpenDocument)

ImgEditor (2019). *Food & beverage organization chart* [Image.] Retrieved from: <https://www.imgeditor.com/edit.php>

Kalron, A., Aloni, R., & Allali, G. (2018). The relationship between depression, anxiety and cognition and its paradoxical impact on falls in multiple sclerosis patients. *Multiple Sclerosis and related disorders*, 25(2018), 167-172. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.msard.2018.07.029>

Kang, M. Y., Kwon, H. J., Choi, K. H., Kang, C. W., & Kim, H. (2017). The relationship between shift work and mental health among electronics workers in South Korea: A cross-sectional study. *PloS one*, 12(11), p. 1-10. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0188019

Kassymova, G. (2018). Stress management techniques recommended for students: Materials of International Practical Internet Conference "Challenges of Science" (pp. 110-116) doi: 10.31643/2018.008

KarriereBibel (n.d.). *Work-Life Balance: 5 Antithesen* [Image.] Retrieved from: <https://karrierebibel.de/work-life-balance/>

Karkoulou, S., Srour, J., & Sinan, T. (2016). A gender perspective on work-life balance, perceived stress, and locus of control. *Journal of business research*, 69(2016), 4918-4923. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2016.04.053>

Khamisa, N., Peltze, K., Ilic, D., & Oldenburg, B. (2016). Effect of personal and work stress on burnout, job satisfaction and general health of hospital nurses in South Africa. *Health SA gesondheid*, 22(2017), 252-258. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.hsag.2016.10.001>

Kozuznik, M. W., Rodríguez, I. & Peiró, J. M. (2013). Development and validation of the Valencia eustress-distress appraisal scale. *International journal of stress management*, 20(4), 279-308. doi: 10.1037/a0034330

Kozuznik, M. W., Rodríguez, I. & Peiró, J. M. (2015). Eustress and distress climates in teams: Patterns and outcomes. *International journal of stress management*, 22(1), 1-23. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0038581>

Lakuta, P. (2018). Social anxiety questionnaire (SAQ): Development and preliminary validation. *Journal of affective disorders*, 238(2018), 233-243. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.05.036>

Lawson, F. (1995). *Hotels and resorts: Planning, design and refurbishment*. Jordan Hill, Oxford: Architectural Press.

Lederer, J., Okumus, F., & Van Niekerk, M. (2016) Burnout in the hospitality industry: The case of a restaurant manager. Retrieved from: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288668575>

Martilla-Santander, N., Lidón-Moyano, C., González-Marrón, A., Bunch, K., Martín-Sánchez, J. C. & Martínez-Sánchez, J.M. (2017). Attitudes toward working conditions:

are European Union workers satisfied with their working hours and work-life balance?. *Gac Sanit*, 1(2017), 1-7.

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gaceta.2017.10.006>

Maslach, C. (1976). Burned-Out. *Human Behavior*, 5(9), 16-22.

doi: 10.12691/education-1-11-7

Maslach, C. & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of occupational behavior*, 2(1981), 99-113. doi: 10.1002/job.4030020205

Maslach, C., Schaufeli, W. B., & Leiter, M. P. (2001). Job burnout. *Annual Review Psychology*, 52(2001), 397-422. doi: 10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.397

McMenamin, T. M. (2007). A time to work: recent trends in shift work and flexible schedules. *Monthly labor review*, 130(12), 3-15. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2007/12/art1full.pdf>

McNamara, M., Bohle, P., & Quinlan, M. (2011). Precarious employment, working hours, work-life conflict and health in hotel work. *Applied ergonomics*, 42(2011), 225-232. doi: 10.1016/j.apergo.2010.06.013

Mohsin, A., Lengler, J. & Kumar, B. (2013). Exploring the antecedents of intentions to leave the job: The case of luxury hotel staff. *International journal of hospitality management*, 35(2013), 48-58. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2013.05.002>

Moon, H. J., Lee, S. H., Lee, H. S., Lee, K. J., & Kim, J. J. (2015). The association between shift work and depression in hotel workers. *Annals of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 27(29), p.1-11. doi:10.1186/s40557-015-0081-0

Ng, C. H., Kato, T., Han, C., Wang, G., Trivedi, M., Ramesh, V., Shao, D., Gala, S., Narayanan, S., Wan, T., Feng, Y., & Kasper, S. (2018). Definition of treatment-resistant depression – Asia Pacific perspectives. *Journal of affective disorders*, 245(2019), 626-636. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.11.038>

OECD. (2015). *Mental health and work: Austria*. Paris: OECD Publishing. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264228047-en>

O'Fallon, M. J. & Rutherford, D. G. (Eds.). (1994). *Hotel management and operations* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Olaya, B., Moneta, M. V., Miret, M., Ayuso-Mateos, J. L., & Haro, J. M. (2018). Epidemiology of panic attacks, panic disorder and the moderating role of age: Results from a population-based study. *Journal of affective disorders*, 241(2018), 627-633. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.08.069>

Panisoara, G. & Serban, M. (2013). Marital status and work-life balance. *Procedia-Social and behavioral sciences*, 78(2013), 21-25. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.04.243

Petreanu, V., Iordache, R., & Seracin, M. (2013). Assessment of work stress influence on work productivity in Romanian companies. *Social and behavioural sciences*, 92(2013), 420-425. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.08.695

Pieh, C., Jank, R., Waiß, C., Pfeifer, C., Probst, T., Lahman, Cl., & Oberndorfer, S. (2018). Night-shift work increases cold pain perception. *Sleep medicine*, 45(2018), 74-79. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sleep.2017.12.014>

Rehm, L. P. (2010). *Depression*. Cambridge: Hogrefe Publishing.

RelaxLikeABoss (n.d.). *The biggest contributors to workplace stress* [Image.] Retrieved from: <https://relaxlikeaboss.com/stress-leave/>

Rethink. (2009). *We can work it out: A local authority line manager's guide to reasonable adjustments for mental illness*. Retrieved from: <https://torch.taw.org.uk/CorporateInformation/OccupationalHealth/Shared%20Documents/Managers%20Guide.pdf>

Reynolds, M. (2012). Three Categories of the Hospitality Industry. *Chron Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://smallbusiness.chron.com/three-categories-hospitality-industry-58524.html>

Ryland, J. (n.d.). Mental health in the hotel industry. Retrieved from: <https://ca.gaultmillau.com/news/mental-health-in-the-hospitality-industry>

Seibt, R., Süße, T., Spitzer, S. Hunger, B. & Rudolf, M. (2015). Nutrition and health in hotel staff on different shift patterns. *Occupational medicine*, 65(2015), 477-484. doi: 10.1093/occmed/kqv068

Shahmohammadi, N. (2011). Student's coping with stress at high school level particularly at 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. *Procedia social and behavioural sciences*, 30(2011), 395-401. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.10.078

Shakula, P. (2008). Essentials of marketing research. Frederiksburg, Denmark: Ventus Publishing ApS.

Shanafelt, T.D., Gradishar, W.J., Kosty, M., Satele, D., Chew, H., Horn, L., Clark, B., Hanley, A.E., Chu, Q., Phippen, J., Sloan, J. & Raymond, M. (2014). Burnout and career satisfaction among US oncologists. *Journal of clinical oncology*, 32(7), 678–86. doi: 10.1200/JCO.2013.51.8480

Shani, A., & Pizam, A. (2009). Work-related depression among hotel employees. *Cornell hospitality quarterly*, 50(4), 446-459. doi: 10.1177/1938965509344294

Siegrist, J. (Ed.) (2015). Stress at work. *International encyclopedia of the social & behavioral science*. New York: Elsevier.

Sincero, S. M. (2012). *Personal interview survey*. Retrieved from: <https://www.nature.com/articles/bdj.2008.192.pdf>

SlideShare. (2014). Sokharoth Hotel [Image]. Retrieved from: <https://www.slideshare.net/sokharothhotel/sokharoth-hotel>

Smith, K.T. (2010). Work-life balance perspectives of future marketing professionals. *Service marketing quarterly*, 31(4), 434-447. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15332969.2010.510724>

Smith, T. D., Hughes, K., DeJoy, D. M., & Dyal, M. (2017). Assessment of relationship between work stress, work-family conflict, burnout and firefighter safety behaviour outcomes. *Safety science*, 103(2018), 287-292. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssci.2017.12.005>

Soni, H. & Rawal, Y.S. (2014). Impact of quality of work life on employee satisfaction in hotel industry. *Journal of business and management*, 16(3), 37-44. Retrieved from: [www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org)

Spitzer, R. L., Endicott, J., & Micoulaud Franchi, J. (2018). Medical and mental disorder: Proposed definition and criteria. *Annales medico-psychologiques*, 176(2018), 656-665. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amp.2018.07.004>

Szasz, T.S. (1960). The myth of mental illness. *American psychologist*, 15(1960), 113-118. doi: 10.1037/h0046535

Tavakoli, M. (2010). A positive approach to stress, resistance, and organizational change. *Procedia social and behavioural science*, 5(2010), 1794-1798. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.366

Tourism Concern. The international union of food, agricultural, hotel, restaurant, catering, tobacco and allied workers' association. (2013). *The impacts of all-inclusive hotels on working conditions and labour rights in Barbados, Kenya & Tenerife*. Retrieved from: <https://www.tourismconcern.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Working-Conditions-in-Hotels.pdf>

Van Hoof, H., Vallen, G., McDonald, M., & Wiener, P. (2007). *A Host of Opportunities: An Introduction to Hospitality Management* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Vienna. Bundesministerium für Gesundheit und Frauen. (2017). *Österreichischer Gesundheitsbericht 2016: Berichtszeitraum 2005-2014/15*. Retrieved from: <https://goeg.at/sites/default/files/2018-01/gesundheitsbericht2016.pdf>

Wickstrøm-Jensen, K., Liu, Y. & Schøtt, T. (2017). Entrepreneurs innovation bringing job satisfaction, work-family balance, and life satisfaction: In China and around the world. *International journal of innovation studies*, 1(2017), 193-206. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijis.2017.11.002>

Zhao, X., Qu, H., & Ghiselli, R. (2011). Examining the relationship of work-family conflict to job and life satisfaction: A case of hotel sales managers. *International*

*journal of hospitality management*, 30(2010), p. 46-54.  
doi: 10.1016/j.ijhm.2010.04.010

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Survey Questions

#### Demographics

- Please state your age
- Male, Female or Other
- In which hotel are you working?
- Which department are you working in?
  - Front Office/ Guest Relation/ Guest Services
  - Food & Beverage
  - Event Operations
  - Housekeeping
  - Security
  - Engineering
  - Other Department (please specify)
  - I am not working in a hotel, but in the hospitality area (e.g. bar, restaurant, spa, etc.)
- How long have you been working in the hotel industry?
  - less than a year
  - 1-5years
  - 5-10 years
  - more than 10 years

#### Questions about your job (Using a Likert scale)

—> 1. Strongly disagree, 6. strongly agree

- The customers are very demanding
- The demands are too high
- The demands are too low
- My job is stressful
- I find jobs in the hotel industry stressful
- I feel stressed

- I can work well in stressful situations
- I have sufficient time to adapt to my changing shifts
- I often feel my job takes over my private life
- I have sufficient time with my friends and family
- I have experience in suffering from any kind of stress related issues
- If yes: Which ones?
  - Sleepiness
  - Moody
  - No appetite
  - Negative thoughts
  - Higher consumption of alcohol
  - Other (please specify)

## **Shift Work**

- Are you currently employed in a job position that requires you to work shifts?
  - Yes
  - No
- If not, have you done shift work during your previous employment?
  - Yes
  - No
- If yes: Are you/ Have you been doing the same shift (e.g. only night shifts) or does/ did your schedule change?
  - Same shifts in a row
  - Changing schedule
- If your shifts change, how long are you doing the same shift in a row?
  - less than a week
  - 1-2 weeks
  - 2-4 weeks
  - more than 4 weeks
- If your shifts change, how many days in between do you have to recover/ adapt to the new schedule?

- 0-2 days
- 3-5 days
- more than 5 days
- How many hours is a typical shift?
  - 8 hours
  - Less than 8 hours
  - More than 8 hours

### **Questions regarding stress and mental health problems at work**

- When doing shift work, have you experienced any of the following symptoms? (more than one answer possible)
  - Exhaustion
  - Depersonalization (distancing oneself from the workplace)
  - Inefficacy (decreasing personal accomplishment)
  - Higher stress levels
  - Depressive symptoms (e.g. negative thoughts, moods and feelings)
  - Higher heart rate
  - worrying about everyday situations (e.g. conversations, social events, crowded places, etc.)
  - Other
- Since working in shifts I have been experiencing:
  - Depression
  - Generalized Anxiety Disorder (heavy worrying about everyday situations)
  - Social Anxiety (anxious feeling before or during social interactions e.g. conversations)
  - Panic Disorder (feeling of intense fear lasting for only a few minutes)
  - Burnout
  - None of the above
- Do you perceive to have a good work-life balance?
  - Yes
  - No

## **Coping strategies for stress in the workplace**

- To what extent does your employer offer trainings regarding work-life balance
  - 1. no strategies, 6. lots of different strategies
- To what extent is your employer offering coping strategies/ trainings regarding stress
  - 1. no strategies, 6. lots of different strategies
- If your employer does not provide any coping strategies, do you believe it is necessary for the HR department to offer some strategies?
  - Yes
  - No
- I perceive to receive enough appraisal for the work I'm doing from my supervisor/ boss
  - 1. strongly disagree, 6. strongly agree
- My workplace offers the following assistance programs:
  - Yes
  - No
- If yes: Which ones?
  - Employee Assistance Programs (Trainings)
  - Stress Management Programs (Trainings)
  - Wellness Programs (Trainings)
  - Mediation

## Appendix 2 – Interview Guide

### 1. Description of the Interview

The research for the Bachelor Thesis comprises of a few expert interviews, where coping strategies and prevention techniques of stress and mental health problems in hotels are being investigated.

#### Structure of the Interview

- The interview will consist of questions that aim to find out about the hotel's way to deal with employees being stressed and potentially suffering from mental health problems.
- The interview will be recorded, transcribed, and analysed.
- Names, that you may mention, will be anonymized during the transcription process of the interview.

### 2. Opening Phase

- How long have you been working in the area of HR?
- Since when are you the HR manager at...?
- Did you already have prior experience with HR management before you started working at...?
- Do you have some academic education concerning HR management?

### 3. Question to reconstruct the contents of the view of the subjective theory of Stress and Mental Health

- A. What comes to your mind when you hear the term "stress"? How would you describe it?
- What are some things that are likely to contribute to a high amount of stress?
  - How much do you think does stress impact the employee's performance on the job?
  - Do you think it is important to promote a good mental health at the workplace?

- In your personal opinion do you believe that front-line employees (such as servers, waiters or receptions) are more stressed due to the amount of time dealing with other people?
- B. What do you link the word “Mental Health” to? What is your opinion on promoting a good mental health at the workplace?
- What is your opinion about the relationship between a poor mental health and the service outcome of employees?
  - Do you believe that the statement *“front-line employees (such as servers, waiters or receptionists) are more prone to mental health problems than people working in the back of a hotel”* is true?
  - Do you think this statement is true for the hotel you are working in?
- C. Stress and Mental Health at...
- Does your hotel provide any trainings regarding time management and living a healthy life your employees?
  - If yes, could you briefly describe the content that is being taught in these trainings?
  - To what extent does this hotel promote a good work-life balance?
  - What kind of coping strategies do you propose to your employees in case of dealing with extreme stress at work?
  - Do affected employees have the option to talk to someone here in the hotel when they believe to deal with a high amount of stress and cannot cope anymore?
  - What happens in case of an employee suffering from a severe mental health issue, such as depression or anxiety?
  - Are you offering any sport activities in which employees can participate outside the hotel?

## Appendix 3 – Transcription – Hotel Sacher

### Hotel Sacher Interview

Wednesday, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019 14:00

**Interviewer:** Okay so the first questions are just about yourself, your position, how long you've been working in the Hotel Sacher. And so how long have you been working in the area of human resource management?

**Interviewee:** Over 15 years.

**Interviewer:** And since when are you working in the Hotel Sacher as an HR manager?

**Interviewee:** In Hotel Sacher just about...uh...just over one year.

**Interviewer:** And did you already have prior experience with HR management before you started working at the Hotel Sacher?

**Interviewee:** Yes. I did.

**Interviewer:** And do you have some academic education concerning HR management?

**Interviewee:** Uhm...Not the classical uhh...education. I...Uhm...in Hospitality uhh pff..employee. I've been...I've been a waiter many many years. I was a receptionist and so on. And then I...uhm...slowly moved into HR management and I just had courses like labor law or payroll and things like that but the rest of it was learning by doing.

**Interviewer:** Sounds interesting. Okay so then the next questions will be about the subject theory of stress and mental health and what comes to your mind when you hear the term stress?

**Interviewee:** Uhm...that's for me it means something like workload. But not only the workload at work but also maybe at home, children or other family members who need special care or something like that or difficult personal whatever you call it. But

yeah if your personal life is not easy and has another workload for you after you've finished in your job.

**Interviewer:** Mhm. Yeah. You already mentioned some of them but what are some things that are likely to contribute to a high amount of stress.

**Interviewee:** Uhm...I believe that if you take on too many things at a time that you are not able to say "no" in between. That is maybe more in HR or for people who work in offices to take on too many appointments during the day because it won't work that you have other work to do as well. But uh...other what amounts to stress if you have very special guests who keep you running for example for a lot of things. Or yeah if you have a lot of other people who are sick in your...uhm...area of work and then you get a higher workload because you have to compensate some things like that.

**Interviewer:** And...how much do you think does stress impact the employee's performance on the job?

**Interviewee:** I think it does impact them quite a lot. I mean you will lose your...uh...the joy, your engagement for working and it doesn't...it's not fun for you anymore and it becomes a burden. So if you wake up every morning and think...oh god...I have to go to work that's the...uh...wrong...uh...thing to think and...uh...stress can have a high impact on that. To change your way of getting up with something.

**Interviewer:** And...uhm..in your personal opinion do you think it's important to promote a good mental health at the workplace?

**Interviewee:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** And...uhm... again in your personal opinion do you believe that front-line employees such as servers, waiters, receptionists are more stressed due to the amount of time dealing with other people?

**Interviewee:** I don't actually. No. I find it...uh...very rewarding to be a front-line employee because you get positive feedback straight away. I mean you do get the negative one as well but you have both sides so I don't think your stress level is that much higher than...uh...say for someone working in an office.

**Interviewer:** Okay and what do you link the word "mental health" to?

**Interviewee:** Uhm...well...uhm...It's physical...uh...health but it influences the physical health...you do...depression, anxiety and or the word that is used so often now. Burnout. I would say I link that to mental health. But I believe...uhm...mental health and physical health are very close or connected close to each other.

**Interviewer:** Yes. And yeah I think you've covered most of it but what is your opinion on the relationship between a poor mental health and the service outcome of an employee?

**Interviewee:** Uhm...I believe that in the service that the employee will not be able to serve properly. There would be...yeah the work might not be done the right way. It will become very difficult and for us here in the hotel it is very important that employees show a lot of empathy towards our guests and that is not possible if you feel mentally ill because you just can't. Yeah you can't show it. You're not capable of doing that.

**Interviewer:** Uhm...So do you believe that this statement is true that frontline employees are more stressed, but you already said you don't think so.

**Interviewee:** No. I'm not even in this from this point of view I...I don't believe it's different enough.

**Interviewer:** And also, not true for the Hotel Sacher?

**Interviewee:** No.

**Interviewer:** Okay...uhm...so now the next part.

**Interviewee:** Mhm.

**Interviewer:** Does your hotel provide any trainings regarding time management and living a healthy life for the employees?

**Interviewee:** Yes, we do. Yes. It is uh...we have the so-called summer school of excellence.

**Interviewer:** Mhm.

**Interviewee:** Where we have over 150 different trainings for our employees and there are not only the trainings for on the job itself but also for time management. We have one training called time management...uhm...but...uhm...efficient time management. That's what we have or for example Mindfulness...uh...it's the...uh...mindfulness and then it means regard for throughout the day and observant throughout the day.

**Interviewer:** Okay.

**Interviewee:** And otherwise we do...have...fitness checks. Physiotherapy. And then also the prevention of stress for line-managers and also for apprentices and we have this. And yes, it's two different trainings because a line-manger has other responsibilities than the apprentices. Because for apprentices it can be very difficult when they come directly from school and start working 40 hours a week. Yeah coming soon we have...we're going to have a health promotion for our workplace. It Will be our try to after about one year that we can get a nice...uhm I can't remember the English word...Urkunde.

**Interviewer:** Certificate

**Interviewee:** Certificate, thank you. That we can then use because we are really taking care of the mental and physical health of our employees.

**Interviewer:** Okay good...uhm...I don't know if you can or if you're the one doing the training, but could you briefly describe what is being taught in these trainings.

**Interviewee:** Uhm...well yeah, the time management is right...yes...so you have to divide your day into the right...uhm...periods.

**Interviewer:** Mhm.

**Interviewee:** Especially those who are working in offices don't make too many appointments for their activities. One third to two thirds because your daily business has to be done and for the other employees in the front line uhm how they have possibilities to do similar things even though they have their guests. They can't just

say no sorry wait or something like that. For the mindfulness I haven't had that training yet and it's done by an external trainer so I can't give you any information on that. Uh...regarding the fitness check, the physiotherapy both these are done from an external trainer, as well. A fitness trainer in that case. And yeah, the fitness check is all about your blood pressure, your heart rate and of course then how your muscles are working and so on and physiotherapy is very personal, depending on what...uhm...part of or area in the hotel you are working with. For example, our ladies doing the rooms, cleaning the rooms they often need help with their backs because it's very straining work.

**Interviewer:** I can imagine.

**Interviewee:** And the others...the stress management for line managers or apprentices I don't know exactly what is being taught.

**Interviewer:** That's no problem. And to what extent does the Hotel Sacher promote a good work-life balance?

**Interviewee:** It should be a goal for every employee. And that is what we at the moment only talk about. It's...uh...very difficult to break that down on all 400 employees that we have here, but it is something that is going to be more and more important over the years. Uhhh...like until now it was hospitality industry where you have to work at least 40 hours a week, but our time is getting more and more important and that makes it easier for us then to get a better work life balance as long as the payment is still all right. But yeah we need to promote it a lot more but can't do it at the level we're standing at the moment because the guest is actually just the most important part of the job. Without the guest we wouldn't be here. So, we still have to find a good way to get the work-life balance in a better balance.

**Interviewer:** Okay and what kind of coping strategies do you propose to your employees in case of dealing with an extreme amount of stress?

**Interviewee:** Well we hopefully do learn about that before they really fall ill because that's the first thing that hopefully the managers will be informed by the employees about what is going on. We do then try and give them our own trainings. And we also have our company physician or doctor. She's here once a week and we are

always getting an appointment with her so that...well she has of course other ideas and has that perspective from a doctor and...uh...maybe can help them from the start.

**Interviewer:** Okay and do...I mean you said that they should tell them before but do affected employees have the option to talk to someone here in the hotel?

**Interviewee:** Yes, I do. I mean they can go to the company doctor anytime. That's no problem. The appointment is or the day she is here is always sent out in an internal communication system. And...uhm...the hotel director is here for anyone to talk to uhm... because we have a lot of employees who've been here for ages. Not only three, five years or something like that but really 10, 15, 20 years and more years and they know the director very well and yeah he has an opinion for everyone. And we do try and get our...uhm...managers to be part of their team and therefore listen to what the employees have to say and that they feel that they can really talk to them.

**Interviewer:** Okay. And what happens in case of an employee suffering from a severe mental issue such as depression or anxiety?

**Interviewee:** Our doctor. She helps them really and makes appointments with therapists and so on. Whatever the employee then needs.

**Interviewer:** Do they also get sick leave for like a few weeks or months?

**Interviewee:** Maybe, see if the sick leave is necessary, it's necessary. That is something that we never or we don't ask for that. If you need...uh...the time that you need to get well is very important. For some people it can go faster, for others it takes longer. As long as we actually know that someone is ill, we don't really have to know what the illness is. But as long as we know that it's fine for us because...yeah...I mean this is not mental illness but...err...we usually know if someone has cancer or something like that and they can all take the time that they need to get well again. And that's fine. Of course, mental illness...it's not that easy because you can't just be diagnosed that well as something like cancer and so on. But therefore, just as an explanation...erm...Sacher is a family owned company and we have a family as one

of our core elements of the hotel and our way to work and yeah. So, in your family you have the time to recover and get well again.

**Interviewer:** That's good. And last question, are you offering any sports activities in which employees can participate outside the hotel?

**Interviewee:** Soon to come. We are pretty in the middle of the year and summer we will have our own health and prevention scheme that we want to implement in the hotel. We will have a trainer who would like two times a week at different times and will then have employees outside the hotel to do some training with them and hopefully we will have a fitness center with which we can then go for it.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you. That's it.

## Appendix 4 – Transcription – Hotel Sans Souci

### Hotel Sans Souci Interview

Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> of May, 14:00

**Interviewer:** So yeah, the first questions are just about yourself. So, the first question would be how long have you been working in the area of HR?

**Interviewee:** Well I've been working in this position as an HR manager for two years now and before I was like..uh...one year as the assistant...executive assistant to the general manager but did a lot of HR topics, as well.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So, you already said that you're the HR manager of the Hotel Sans Souci since two years.

**Interviewee:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** And did you already have prior experience with HR management before you started here?

**Interviewee:** Just from university. I was...like...specialized in HR management. So that's basically it.

**Interviewer:** So yeah and you already answered the last question. Do you have some academic education?

**Interviewee:** Yeah well, my academic education is Business Administration as well as Tourism and Leisure management.

**Interviewer:** Mhm.

**Interviewee:** And then there was just the specialization in the Masters, that was HR management.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So yeah. What comes to your mind when you hear the term stress?

**Interviewee:** Well stress is hard to explain. Like the stress could be different things...could be on the one hand side, that there are too many tasks which you have to do. On the other side, could be stress because of a stressful situation where a person standing in front of you wants something which you cannot handle or if there are too many people at the same time and you have to take care about all of them. But that is really the stress in the situation where after you've finished your working day you just go home and the stressful situation is gone. On the other side, if you're working...like...in the office it's just so many tasks at hand that you really cannot switch off when you're going home, you're still thinking about the tasks you have to do all the time because just of work overload.

**Interviewer:** And in your opinion what are some things that are likely to contribute to a higher amount of stress?

**Interviewee:** Too many tasks on the one side and on the other side guest wishes in the hospitality industry.

**Interviewer:** Yeah especially in the hotel. And how much do you think does stress impact the employees' performance on the job?

**Interviewee:** Well a lot because if it's an overwhelming situation they can't think properly then they cannot solve any problems properly. They do a lot of mistakes. So, reducing the amount of stress is a good thing to do.

**Interviewer:** Mhm. In your personal opinion do you think that frontline employees such as the front office staff and receptionist, waiters and concierges. Do you think they suffer more from the amount of stress due to the people they don't know?

**Interviewee:** They have a different level of stress. Yes of course, due the people they have more stress because when you are in a back office and there is a lot of tasks you still can prioritize, but a guest is always the priority. And if there is a lot of guests you have to handle all of them at the same time which is just not possible. So the only thing you can do about that is that there is enough employees working but sometimes it's also not possible because there are times where you have a lot of people coming and then there is times where you have none coming but you just cannot say when people come because for example at reception you know you have

thirty check-ins a day. Yeah, but what do you do with all the thirty check-ins coming at 3 p.m. when actually check-in starts. Of course, it's normally not the case but it could happen. Yeah, it's something you cannot do anything about.

**Interviewer:** Uhm. And what do you link toward mental health to?

**Interviewee:** Mental health. Mental health is not only stress I would say. But also, if you have like depression or any other kind of anxiety something like that. That could be mental health as well.

**Interviewer:** And do you think promoting a good mental health in the workplace is important for employees?

**Interviewee:** Definitely.

**Interviewer:** And so, we already talked about the stress and the impact of stress, but do you think a poor mental health and the service outcome of employees are kind of related and impact each other?

**Interviewee:** Yes of course, because you just can handle problems better when you're in a better mood and a better mental health state. You just can do a normal amount of tasks I would say yes.

**Interviewer:** Yes, so the statement about the frontline employees that they suffer more. Do you think it's true for the Hotel Sans Souci?

**Interviewee:** No. Also, for housekeeping employees it can be stressful because they don't have a direct contact with the guest. They are not really front of line, but they know until 3:00 they have to do all the rooms now.

**Interviewer:** So, then we already talked about that it's good to have...To promote mental health at the workplace. And does your hotel provide any trainings regarding time management and living a healthy life?

**Interviewee:** Well we do work with a doctor. Like for the...all areas related to health care. It's also in combination with the law actually because we work like for more security reasons with safe work. And then we have a combination with a

doctor...who is a doctor and he has to do a certain amount of hours at the hotel and sometimes it's just really related to physical health. Like getting injections, stuff like that but on the other side he's also doing some classes. On the one hand side, that could be how you do carry things probably but also about sleep management, time management. It always depends a little bit where people really have a need at a moment. This year introduced them to about sleep management for example, but it also goes along with time management.

**Interviewer:** And I don't know if you're the one who's doing the trainings. Like you said the doctor's doing the sleep management and the time management but...uhm...could you briefly describe what is being taught in these trainings?

**Interviewee:** Well we haven't had it yet.

**Interviewer:** Oh, you haven't had it yet. But do you already have like an idea. Do you give the doctor ideas like could you please talk about these topics?

**Interviewee:** Na na...it was really at the beginning of each year we just have a quick chat together what we are going to do. Last year, it was a lot about carrying weight. How we can just...uhm...help housekeeping staff, the employees at a spa just to be physical healthy...physically healthy. And this year will be more about mental health. But he is the expert in this field, so I told him yes let's do something about time management and he came up with sleep management, which is also important to get that balance to stay mentally healthy as well.

**Interviewer:** Just a quick question regarding the Sleep Management? Uhm...Your front office and housekeeping are they divided into like different shifts like the morning shift?

**Interviewee:** Mhm. But they do have like...the shifts don't always stay the same. So, one week you're doing like an early shift. Next week is that they might do a different shift.

**Interviewer:** So, a changing schedule?

**Interviewee:** Exactly.

**Interviewer:** And...like...so currently there's like the big topic of work life balance. Does the hotel promote a good work life balance for the employees or not?

**Interviewee:** Well I don't really like the word work life balance. For me it should be more like work life integrations everything is just yes on balance. But still you have to integrate it because you really spend a lot of time at work so there must be integration. It is hard if you're working on a schedule. You can't really do a lot about that. But if we do have any students, we help them that they can organize their classes with their work schedule. Uhm...we do a lot like that they just work part time for a period then work full time again. But it's always still shift work which is hard for a work-life integration or whatever you call it. It's hard. You can say whatever you want but then we do have a lot of benefits programs as well. Just like with external companies most of the time...uhm...yoga, gyms, massage institutes stuff like that where our employees can have better prices.

**Interviewer:** Yeah that's good. And what kind of coping strategies do you propose to your employees who suffer from like an extreme amount of stress?

**Interviewee:** We do send them to stress classes. Well the WiFi offers a lot of classes how to cope with stress. So, we do that. A good strategy is especially when you're wearing a uniform is that you just keep in mind whenever you take off the uniform you can leave your stress there and whatever happened bad just take it off you're in another life now. That's just a little hint you can give them you can try to organize the work day. You know that they have the checklist which they have to do but you can organize it a little bit more themselves. And if you see okay, they can't handle it at all. Just give it to the next shift. You don't have to do all the things yourself. Every employee can delegate so no matter what the position is. So, they really have to have a look a little bit about themselves. What they do what they can't do.

**Interviewer:** Are these classes external or internal?

**Interviewee:** External. With mental health it's hard for you to have internal practice a lot.

**Interviewer:** Yeah that's true. So, it's already the last three questions. Do affected people have the option to talk to someone here in the hotel like for example you as the HR manager?

**Interviewee:** Ja. Either they come to me or they can have a chat with a doctor as well. He's not here regularly but if someone really needs it, we can just organize it.

**Interviewer:** And how often does the doctor visit the hotel? Once a week, once a month?

**Interviewee:** It's once a month.

**Interviewer:** And what happens in case of an employee suffering from a severe mental health issue such as depression or anxiety.

**Interviewee:** Hard. Well we have one employee who has depression. And she's a lot on sick leave. And yes of course we support her. We gave her addresses from different kind of psychologists, doctors whatever but at some point, if she's always on sick leave you have to make a decision whether you keep her or not.

**Interviewer:** So, you kind of give her the time to get well again?

**Interviewee:** Always, always. Yeah. And if they are like a lot on sick on sick leave. Like six weeks plus you can also have...have this program which is called "Wiedereingliederungsteilzeit" in German which we can do then so they can reduce their working time. Let's say they are working then just 20 hours here but get paid the full amount. Partly we just pay the half time and the other part will be paid by the "Krankenkassa". So that's what we did with her as well.

**Interviewer:** And last question as you already mentioned that employees have the benefits of going to yoga classes, gym classes. But as a hotel do you also have like community activities such as the whole front office department for example goes out to the park and like have a jog or do sports?

**Interviewee:** They rather go to restaurants (laughs).

**Interviewer:** OK.

**Interviewee:** Well we have a football kind of club. But it's not just one department it's from all the departments. And then we just organized like participating in for example the business run something like that. But it's not really regularly. It's actually hard in such a small house to organize regular classes because someone has always to work and then nobody is attending. We tried that with in-house Pilates classes once because one of our employees she was a Pilates teacher. But after three months she said just that doesn't make fun if there is always just two people.

**Interviewer:** Okay. Thank you. That's it.

## Appendix 5 – Survey Answers

Age	Gender	Hotel	Department	Experience	The customers are very demanding	The demands are too high
22	Male	St.Regis	FO	less than a year	6	5
23	Female	None	FO	1-5 years	3	2
35	Male	None	IT	more than 10 years	3	2
21	Female	London EDITION	Event Operations	less than a year	4	3
19	Female	Hotel sacher	FO	less than a year	6	5
21	Male	Le Meridien	Housekeeping	1-5 years	5	4
24	Female	ARCOTEL Hotels	Marketing	1-5 years	3	3
21	Female	STAR INN Hotel	FO	1-5 years	5	4
23	Male	5 star	Food & Beverage	1-5 years	6	4
25	Female	Marriott	Food & Beverage	1-5 years	5	3
22	Male	me and all hotel	FO	less than a year	4	3
22	Female	InterContinental Vienna	Food & Beverage	5-10 years	5	2
22	Female	Hilton	FO	less than a year	6	3
23	Female	Hotel Innerhofer	Food & Beverage	1-5 years	4	3
31	Male	Amterdam marriott hotel	FO	more than 10 years	4	4

28	Female	Hotel Avenida 3* San Sebastian	FO	1-5 years	6	4
49	Female	Sacher	Food & Beverage	more than 10 years	6	2
21	Female	Hotel Sacher	FO	1-5 years	4	1
25	Female	Hotel Sacher	FO	more than 10 years	5	4
42	Female	Hotel Sacher wien	FO	more than 10 years	6	5
30	Female	Sacher Hotel Wien	FO	more than 10 years	5	3
21	Male	Hotel Sacher Wien	FO	1-5 years	5	2
23	Female	Amsterdam Marriott Hotel	FO	1-5 years	5	3

The demands are too low	My job is stressful	I find jobs in the hotel industry stressful	I feel stressed	I can work well in stressful situations
3	3	3	2	5
4	6	6	6	3
2	6	6	6	6
2	6	5	5	4
1	4	6	3	5
2	4	4	5	3
1	5	5	5	6
2	5	6	6	4
1	5	5	5	5
3	5	5	4	4
3	4	4	5	4
2	4	5	3	4

2	6	6	6	2
3	4	4	2	5
1	5	6	4	3
1	6	6	4	5
5	4	4	3	5
2	5	5	2	6
1	5	5	6	5
2	6	6	6	5
1	5	5	5	5
5	4	6	4	6
3	2	4	3	5

I often feel my job takes over my private life	I have sufficient time with my friends and family	Experience in suffering from any kind of stress related issues
2	5	1
6	2	2
6	1	6
5	2	5
3	5	4
4	2	5
6	2	3
6	1	6
6	1	4

5	3	2
4	2	1
4	4	1
1	3	6
2	4	3
4	3	6
6	1	6
4	3	4
2	5	6
6	1	6
6	1	6
5	2	4
4	4	3
3	3	1

If yes: Which ones?	Currently employed in shift work?	Shift work in previous position
	No	No
Nothing	No	Yes
Negative thoughts	Yes	Yes
Sleepiness, Being moody, Negative thoughts, No motivation	Yes	
Being moody, No motivation	Yes	Yes
Sleepiness, Being moody, Negative thoughts, No motivation	Yes	

Sleepiness, Being moody	No	Yes
Sleepiness, Being moody, No motivation	No	Yes
Sleepiness	Yes	
	No	Yes
	Yes	No
	No	No
Being moody, No motivation	Yes	Yes
Sleepiness	Yes	Yes
Sleepiness, Negative thoughts, No motivation	Yes	
Sleepiness, Being moody, No motivation, anxiety	Yes	Yes
Being moody	Yes	
Negative thoughts	No	No
Sleepiness, Being moody, No appetite, Negative thoughts, No motivation	Yes	Yes
Sleepiness, Being moody, Negative thoughts, No motivation	Yes	
Sleepiness, Being moody	Yes	Yes
Sleepiness, Being moody, Negative thoughts, No motivation	Yes	Yes
	Yes	Yes

Same or different schedule?	How long same shift in a row?	Time to recover/ adapt to shift	Duration of a shift?	Sufficient time adapting to changing schedule
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	5
Changing schedule	1-2 weeks	0-2 days	8 hours	4
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	1

Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	more than 8 hours	5
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	4
Changing schedule	1-2 weeks	0-2 days	8 hours	4
Changing schedule	1-2 weeks	0-2 days	8 hours	1
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	3
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	1
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	3
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	2
Same shifts in a row	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	5
Changing schedule	1-2 weeks	3-5 days	8 hours	3
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	4
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	2
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	1
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	more than 8 hours	4
Same shifts in a row	more than 4 weeks	0-2 days	8 hours	6
Changing schedule			more than 8 hours	3
Same shifts in a row	more than 4 weeks	0-2 days	more than 8 hours	1
Changing schedule	2-4 weeks	0-2 days	less than 8 hours	3
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	more than 8 hours	2
Changing schedule	less than a week	0-2 days	8 hours	3

When doing shift work have you been experiencing any of the following symptoms
Exhaustion
Higher stress levels
All of them
Exhaustion, Higher stress levels, Depressive symptoms
Exhaustion, Depressive symptoms
Depersonalization, Inefficiency, Depressive symptoms, Worrying about everyday situations
Exhaustion, Worrying about everyday situations
Exhaustion, Inefficiency, Higher stress levels
Exhaustion
Exhaustion, Higher stress levels
Exhaustion, Inefficiency
Exhaustion, Higher stress levels
Exhaustion, Changing moods
Exhaustion, Higher stress levels, Depressive symptoms, Higher heart rate, Worrying about everyday situations, Changing moods
Exhaustion, Depersonalization, Inefficiency, Higher stress levels, Depressive symptoms, Higher heart rate, Changing moods
Exhaustion, Inefficiency, Changing moods
All of them
Exhaustion, Inefficiency, Higher stress levels, Depressive symptoms, Higher heart rate, Worrying about everyday situations, Changing moods
Exhaustion, Inefficiency, Higher stress levels, Changing moods
Exhaustion, Higher stress levels, Higher heart rate, Changing moods

Exhaustion

Since working in shifts I have experienced	Having a good work-life balance?	Trainings regarding work-life balance
None of the above	Yes	4
None of the above	No	1
Depression	No	1
Depression	No	4
None of the above	Yes	4
Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety, Panic Disorder	No	5
Generalized Anxiety Disorder	Yes	1
	Yes	1
None of the above	No	2
None of the above	No	3
None of the above	No	2
None of the above	Yes	2
Burnout	Yes	2
None of the above	Yes	1
Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety, Burnout, Bipolar I Disorder	No	2
Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Burnout	No	1
None of the above	Yes	4
Depression, Social Anxiety	Yes	5
Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Burnout	No	1

Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Social Anxiety	No	2
None of the above	No	3
	No	3
Burnout	Yes	3

Employer offers coping strategies regarding stress	Necessary to offer coping strategies?	Workplace offers trainings
4	Yes	Yes
1	Yes	No
1	Yes	No
3	Yes	Yes
4	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	Yes
1	Yes	No
1	Yes	No
2	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes
2	No	No
2	Yes	Yes
1	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes
3	Yes	No

1	Yes	No
4	Yes	Yes
5	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	No
2	No	Yes
3	No	No
3	Yes	Yes
3	Yes	Yes

Which ones?	Receiving enough appraisal
Employee Assistance Program/ Training	5
	3
Nothing	1
Wellness Program/ Training, Mediation, Yoga and other sports	4
Employee Assistance Program/ Training, Stress Management Program/ Training	5
Employee Assistance Program/ Training, Wellness Program/ Training, Mediation	4
	6
	2
Employee Assistance Program/ Training	2
Wellness Program/ Training	4
	3
Employee Assistance Program/ Training	4

Employee Assistance Program/ Training	3
Wellness Program/ Training	4
	2
	2
Stress Management Program/ Training, Wellness Program/ Training, Mediation	5
Employee Assistance Program/ Training, Stress Management Program/ Training	6
	2
Stress Management Program/ Training	3
Employee Assistance Program/ Training, Stress Management Program/ Training	5
Employee Assistance Program/ Training, Stress Management Program/ Training	1
Wellness Program/ Training	3

