



Preventative Medicine Approaches to Current Employment and Health Issues

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DESCRIPTION

Working time management is a critical issue in work organization because it is the fundamental condition that connects human capabilities with production resources. This issue has grown in prominence in recent decades due to the development of new technologies and the expansion of basic services to general populations, which necessitates continual human support and control over work operations throughout the 24 hour day. This issue is also linked to the increasing economic competitiveness among corporations and countries as a result of the progressive globalization of the labour market and productive methods, which entails an increasingly intensive and broad exploitation of productive systems.

According to the most recent statistics, the majority of the working population works irregular or "non-standard" hours, such as shift and night work, week-end employment, split shifts, on-call work, compressed, the traditional working day is now a condition impacting a minority of workers, namely 27% of employed people and 8% of self-employed people, according to a European poll on working conditions. If there are no negative interferences with workers' health and well-being, such diversification of working hours should contribute to the betterment of human existence by providing more commodities, services, employment, and higher wages.

The most commonly studied condition is shift work, particularly work that includes night shifts, because it may interfere with human homeostasis and well-being on multiple levels. At the biological level, the disruption, in some cases, inversion of the sleep/wake cycle, as a result of the altered activity/rest pattern, is

a significant stress for the endogenous regulation of "circadian" rhythms of biological functions, which are driven by the body clock located in the suprachiasmatic nuclei of the encephalon and synchronized by environmental cues. Remaining awake at night and attempting to sleep during the day is not a physiological condition for diurnal species like humans, who are therefore forced to modify their psycho-physiological state by a phase change in the daily fluctuation of biological activities. Workers in rotating shift work are under constant pressure to adjust as quickly as possible to variable duty periods, which is partially and invariably thwarted by the constant changeovers, whereas permanent night workers can adjust almost completely if they maintain their inverted sleep/wake cycle even on their days off. The misalignment of circadian rhythms of body functions is responsible for the so-called "jet lag" syndrome, which is characterized by feelings of fatigue, sleepiness, insomnia, digestive issues, irritability, decreased mental agility, and decreased performance efficiency; a person recovers in a few days depending on the length and duration of the phase shift imposed, personal characteristics, and coping strategies.

Workers normally go to bed as soon as they get home, which is one or two hours after the conclusion of the shift, depending on commute time and family responsibilities. This implies that individuals must sleep during the typical rising phase of biological rhythms, which maintains awake; this makes it harder to fall asleep and sleep longer. Also, because the surrounding conditions are not optimal, such as unpleasant noises and illumination, sleep might be disrupted and wakefulness can be prolonged. As a result, sleep is cut by 2-4 hours, disturbed more frequently or early, and worse stage 2 and Rapid Eye Movement sleep is more likely. Workers view this as less restorative sleep.

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