Abstract:

This paper studies challenges confronting women while seeking to enter and sustain a career in the booming male dominated private security companies (PSCs). It uses the socialist feminist approach and qualitative interviews with female and male security guards, and PSC managers in Iringa, Tanzania to show that women seeking employment in PSCs are constrained by sexual harassment and exploitation as well as having to secure consent of their spouses before they can take up the job offers. Similarly, for those who make it into the PSCs, challenges such as tight and long-hour shifts and sexual harassment and exploitation are part of their daily experiences at work. The strategies devised to address these challenges and/or cope with them are not helping women. Moreover, while some challenges are common to both men and women, their sexual differences and burdensome domestic chores make women more vulnerable than men.