Professionalism Perception and Client Satisfaction:
An Analysis of the Bouncers-Doormen Performance

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to evaluate the degree of customer satisfaction with the security guards of the nightclubs as well as the perception of their professionalism in performing their duties. Using survey data from 479 nightclub clients to assess the clients' professionalism perception of bouncers-doormen and satisfaction, the results indicate an overall satisfaction and bouncers-doormen to be recognized as professionals. Findings also partially contradict previous research. Despite recognizing a certain degree of abuse of power, customers consider those professionals as helpful, especially in emergency situations where they provide guidance and the necessary support. They are also considered to properly watch and protect people and goods in nighttime entertainment spaces and have a good ability to foresee and anticipate incidents.

KEYWORDS

Bouncers-Doormen, Client Satisfaction, Nightclubs, Nighttime Economy, Private Security Guards

1. INTRODUCTION

Private security encompasses a wide range of services, which may be legally provided by entities qualified to do so and which affect security guards with the specialty indicated for each of these types of services. As such, it is important to know the public perception of the users of the night-time entertainment spaces about the professionalism of the security guards as well as their satisfaction as customers.

Several events around the world have been widely reported, given truly complex situations involving bouncers-doormen, including several deaths, both of these professionals and of clients who frequent the clubs. Portugal was not and is not an exception. They have experienced situations that have had a real impact on public opinion, both because of the violence and the visibility they have achieved. It is therefore essential to understand this phenomenon of violence associated with the bouncers-doormen profession and to understand whether or not the media scaremongering that has been generated around them is validated by clients who frequent nightclubs. The perception of

professionalism and client satisfaction with these professionals is all the more necessary to better frame this phenomenon.

Customers are the focus and will always be at the center of any organization. It is important to keep them satisfied. There are several surveys that present a very wide and heterogeneous range of benefits for companies by keeping their customers satisfied (Ibrahim, Abdallahamed, and Adam, 2018). The relevance of customers can never be underestimated and companies, as a whole and in a global and integrated way, have as their main goal to satisfy their current customers and attract new ones (Murali, Pugazhendhi and Muralidharan, 2016). It is therefore important that the whole company is committed to customer satisfaction, but not only. There are situations, as with this research, where other companies and their employees also contribute in an integrated way to the satisfaction of the final customer. The security guards, who provide security services in the night entertainment spaces, are usually employees of the private security company, but for the customer who attends the club are integrated in the club and there is no separation. As such, the bouncers-doormen are the first face and represent both their employer and the space where they work. It is then very clear that for both companies the success lies in the ability of security companies to attract the most suitable workers and to establish better working conditions for these professionals to perform their duties highly (Galli, 2020a).

Despite this importance, citizens' perception of the professionalism of private security guards and their satisfaction with their performance remains under-explored. Although there are many studies on public security, there is little research on the population's perception of private security. To our best knowledge there is no research on private security contexts. Moreira, Cardoso and Nalla (2015) alerts that future research should explore the perspectives of security guards in specific contexts, especially in nightlife places such as bars and clubs, where exists more controversy regarding these professionals. Accordingly, this study aims to explore the way nightlife clients evaluate the professionalism of the security guards and what is their level of satisfaction with their performance. The object of this research is the security staff, i.e. private security guards, with the specialty of bouncers-doormen, who provide security services in night entertainment spaces.

Nightlife has its own characteristics and specificities that affect and are affected by private security. At the end of 2017, two serious events, spent outside Lisbon's highly mediatized night-time entertainment places, placed the security of these venues in the spotlight of society. It was even claimed that they caused the change in the legal regime of the private security sector.

This work, within the immensity that is the nightlife and its private security, focuses only on the situation of the private security guards who regularly provide services in these places and the perception that clients and users of the places have about their professionalism and performance, as well as their degree of satisfaction.

Several methodologies are already tested and available to measure customer satisfaction. In this research we explore an aspect directly related to the client's perception of the specific work of private security guards. Mesko (1998), conducted an investigation on client satisfaction with private security services, where the results showed that client satisfaction is directly related to contractually defined security responsibilities (Nalla, Mesko, Sotlar and Johnson, 2006).

The article is structured as follows: the next section will present the bibliographic review contemplating the basic themes of research such as the security guard industry, the private security guards who working in nightlife spaces as well as a contextualization of their work environment and actions taken to promote safety in nightlife. This section will end with prior research findings. The third section will be dedicated to the methodology where the research design and measures will be described. The fourth section will present the results, allowing readers to get closer contact with the empiric developed. In the fifth section there will be discussion and analysis of the results achieved. Finally in the sixth and last section the authors will present the conclusions of the research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The Security Guard Industry

Security, as a global concept, is not a current concern or a fashion issue, it is a situation that has accompanied humanity since its creation. Our ancestors sought protection for themselves, their families and their possessions, using the means provided by nature at the time.

Fear is now present in urban life. The fear of crime, of random events (disasters, epidemics), the fear of others and the fear of the future reflect a widespread current of insecurity that has come to characterise everyday life in our cities (Micha and Koutrolikou 2019).

The fight against crime requires a major integrated and transversal effort in the search for sustainable solutions between the different bodies of the State and of society in general, which include, on their own merits, private security companies. All over the world, public security no longer has the predominant role of maintaining order and preventing crime (Paek, Nalla and Lee 2018). It is generally well accepted that the growth of private security is the result of increased crime. However, the growth of private security may be due more to a general feeling of insecurity and to the fact that the protection promoted by states is not unlimited than to criminal problems (Van Steden, and De Waard, 2013).

A response outside the public domain to the impact of globalization on the growing complexity of society with new dimensions of increasingly complex threats is not something entirely new (Button and Stiernstedt 2017; Duque et al., 2020), since even before the development of a public police force, law enforcement activities, including investigation, harassment and seizure, were conducted by private citizens (Klein and Hemmens, 2018). Private security services have been provided for centuries, both in cities and elsewhere (Garmany and Galdeano 2018).

States that are at a more developed stage of studying the implementation of optimized security solutions have decided to privatize some police functions since they do not have the effective capacity to guarantee the security and protection of citizens and economic agents in their daily lives, nor of the society in general, which is more and more evolved and with challenges in terms of security are more and more demanding. Entrepreneurship and private initiative and the privatisation of functions previously only in the public sector are phenomena common to all liberal market economies (Dias et al., 2020; van Steden and Nalla 2010).

There is naturally a lot of interest and discussion about private security companies and the security service as well as the issues surrounding the nature of the industry both in terms of growth and regulation and accountability (Nalla and Gurinskaya 2017). However, knowledge about their scope, powers, regulation and social impact is still scarce (Van Steden and Sarre, 2007).

Private security has assumed a major role in modern societies. It is virtually impossible in major European or world cities for ordinary citizens not to come across a significant number of private security guards on a daily basis in places such as shopping centres, leisure centres, public transport, music and sports events, airports, government facilities, military bases, courts in many other places (Button and Stiernstedt 2017). The economic activity of private security provision has expanded dramatically (Hansen Löfstrand, Loftus and Loader 2016). This growth is not a particularity of the private security sector, since, in general, the entire service sector has reached levels never reached before and has contributed and contributes positively to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of several countries (Ishola, and Olusoji, 2020).

The concept of "policing" has extended its limits and the provision of the service by private and commercial actors is now a reality. Private security entered an area previously monopolised by public security forces and services, it is not acceptable today to consider security management without the contribution of the private sector (Livingstone and Hart 2003).

In many developed or developing countries, in Central Europe but not only, the number of private security guards exceeds the number of police (Nalla and Gurinskaya 2020), and in some countries they outnumber the police and also the military (Haughton, Smith and Berndtsson 2019). Public

security forces and private security companies must be united with the same goal, supported by a close partnership to exchange information, knowledge and experience.

Private security has assumed a very significant role and an undeniable importance in the world context, both because of the volume of business it moves and the entities it involves and also because of the number of workers it employs, but above all because of the relevance of its activity, providing a complementary service to the security forces and services of the States (Silva and Dias 2016).

Although, in terms of concept, there is a clear distinction between private security and public security, the truth is that ordinary citizens, in their daily lives, do not perceive a significant difference between private and public security, and do not find a real and fundamental distinction between an officer and private security (Simões, 2011).

In Portugal, private security activity is published annually in the Annual Private Security Report. Based on this report (RASP 2018) there are 87 service providers and a total of 37871 private security guards working in these companies. The number of private security companies has been steadily increasing since 2013, but has not yet reached 2009, 2010 and 2011 figures. In addition to these 37,871 professionals, there are still 17,924 legally qualified professionals who are not in active service. This will not be a perfect oligopoly, but this market is concentrated in a small number of companies, where the 10 largest companies were responsible for 67% of new admissions in the year 2017. The average age of private security is 38, 98% are Portuguese and only 10% are female. In Portugal, security professionals are subdivided into nine specialties, requiring different professional training and a separate professional card for each one. For the same period in Portugal, there were 45,553 staff in the State security forces and services (RASI 2018).

All of the above demonstrates the important role of private security in the framework of internal security policy in Portugal, contributing to the security of the country and its citizens. Portuguese society perceives private security's performance in a similar way as it interprets the performance of state security forces (Silva 2016).

2.1.1. Private Security Guards Working in Nightlife Spaces

Following the evolution and expansion of the private security industry, there were, at the same time, changes in the function of private security guards, who were initially hired essentially as security guards in buildings, facilities and condominiums (Kim, Button and Lee, 2018).

As mentioned above, in Portugal there are nine different specialties for private security guards, so only that specialty whose objective is to perform its functions in nightlife spaces, essentially bars and nightclubs, will be analysed.

Of the 37871 private security guards active at the end of 2017, 6982 have the specialty of "bouncers-doormen" (RASP 2018). As for all specialties, their functions are defined in the legal regime of private security activity (Law n.46/2019) and the "bouncers-doormen" performs exclusively the following functions: a) to watch over and protect people and goods in restaurants or drinks establishments with dancing areas or where dancing is customary; b) to control the entry, presence and exit of people from the establishments provided for in the preceding paragraph, using the means provided for in special legislation, with a view to detecting and preventing the introduction of objects and substances prohibited or likely to enable acts of violence; c) to prevent the practice of crimes in relation to the object of their protection; and d) to guide and provide support to the users of the said areas in emergency situations, namely those involving the evacuation of the establishment. Among many legal requirements for the exercise of this activity, it is mandatory to attend, successfully, an initial qualification course lasting 230 hours. In the specific case of these professionals there are many employability skills, i.e., minimal skills required to achieve, maintain and perform well at work (Silva, de Amorim Carvalho & Dias, 2019; Sisodia and Agrawal, 2019).

Many voices were critical of the private security activity and the performance of bouncers-doormen in the nightly entertainment spaces. The idea was immediately passed on to the public that private security guards would not be part of the solution, but of the problem. The growing importance

of private security in society has made it subject to greater media scrutiny (Livingstone and Hart 2003). Many public opinions focused on a misguided, unfair view of night-time entertainment venue bouncers-doormen, who were once seen as muscle thuggers. This function has evolved, legal requirements have increased and been professionalized over the years, but there are still links to the past (Calvey 2018).

Still in the month of December of that year, the Municipal Assembly of Lisbon, launched two sessions to debate the Safety and Quality of Nightlife in the City of Lisbon, where in the first one, which focused on the safety of nightlife, other issues, which should not be dissociated from the action of private security guards, were put to the discussion as the lack of policing, the disproportionate allocation of human police resources and the mismanagement of that staff, the need to clarify the role of private security guards, the need for video-surveillance in the notorious territories and greater oversight and accountability of economic operators (Monteiro 2018).

There is no unanimity regarding private security guards working in nightclubs, however, the refusal of private security is widely recognized as a valid and legitimate solution knowing what people have and going out at night and attending nightclubs (Wadds 2011). As night takes the place of day and the State does not assume its security obligations, this responsibility falls on bouncer-doorman, which coordinates night-time visitors with the rules and protocols of the night-time leisure market (Hobbs, Hadfield, Lister, and Winlow 2002).

These professionals work in very complex places, with very particular conditions that cannot be dissociated in their work. They are workers at night who are characterized by darkness and who offer the "right conditions" for transgressive behavior that is not carried out during the day (Sisson and Maginn 2018). They are obliged to live daily, in a work context, with altered people under the effect of alcohol or psychoactive substances, and they keep in mind that all the altercations between clients and their actions have the potential to generate a legal action. In addition to the issue of acting within the legal framework, which may result in the loss of professional qualification, they have many other concerns, which are not only the fear of a few broken bones, but also the risk of death, if a client withdraws to the outside and waits for them with a lethal weapon (Berkley 1997).

Working as a security guard for a big nightclub is risky. There are many people gathered in the same place and at the same time, where confrontations can occur in a matter of seconds (Simittchiev 2018). To do their job well, and safely, there must be regular collaboration with the police, both in the exchange of information and in the protection that public forces can provide. However, this desirable collaboration can be affected by overly coercive police action and also difficulty in identifying the boundaries between private and public security (Søgaard, Houborg and Tutenges 2016).

2.2. Bouncers-doormen Working Context

2.2.1. Night-time Economy

For this research it is important to highlight the environment where the private security guards under study develop their professional activity, because the public perception of a private security guard working in a shopping mall or a hospital may not be the same as that of a private security guard in a very different context as is the night entertainment.

The theme and contextualization of nightlife has received much interest and attention in the academic environment, being studied from various perspectives. It has become known as "night-time economy", terminology that has its origin in the academic work of Charles Landry and colleagues on creative cities (Shaw 2014).

The nightlife of cities has been recognized as an important resource for improvements in cities and the promotion of gentrification in slums or areas, since it spreads the idea of a vibrant social and cultural life, which meets the preferences of the younger working class, with an interest in living there. The proliferation of nightlife sites generally has an important impact on the dynamism of the real estate market, especially in slum areas or neighborhoods, contributing positively to a positive and lively atmosphere in these areas (Hae 2011).

In Lisbon, even in the context of promoting the city, nightlife is not forgotten, on the contrary, and is a very prominent target. The Strategic Tourism Plan for the Lisbon Metropolitan Region 2015-2019 emphasized nightlife as one of the main products to be promoted in the internationalization of the city (Nofre et al. 2017). In the specific case of the younger public, the fun is to enjoy the offers of fashionable places, linked to activities related to music and dance, so the characteristics of nightlife environments have been determining their way and lifestyle, creating patterns of consumption of alcohol and drugs, as well as the adoption of other risky behaviors (Lomba, Apostle and Cardoso 2012).

The involvement of nightlife places is not a local reality, but common to the world's major urban centres. It is not even a recent phenomenon, although it may appear due to the proliferation of content through current technological means and the prominence it has recently deserved. Roberts (2006) already mentioned in 2005 that in the previous 10 years many English urban centres had been transformed from relatively deserted places at night to places where teenagers and alcohol live on the streets until the early hours of the morning.

For Hadfield, Lister and Traynor (2009), the recent focus on antisocial behaviour and violence in urban environments is only the latest in a long tradition of public disquiet about the surroundings of urban life. For those who frequent the nightlife places in the big urban centres, live the reality of the animation of lights and neons, accompanied by soft musical notes and strong beats, the buzz of people's conversation and the smell of fast-food, as soon as the night falls (Brands 2014).

The nightlife places with everything they offer, are part of society, mainly in the big urban centers. Entrepreneurs seek to respond to the needs of their clients, including those of security, however, as it is not their core business, many decisions in this matter are made based on business instinct, previous experiences and knowledge or through trial and error (Galli and Battiloro, 2019). They present advantages and benefits for those who frequent them, providing opportunities to socialize, relax and even exercise through dance, however, these benefits coexist closely with substantial challenges for people's health, such as the consumption of alcohol, tobacco or drugs (Hughes and Bellis, 2003). These new spaces are integrated in easily identifiable zones, oriented to a younger public with a strong appetite for alcohol consumption as a dynamo of social activity (Hadfield, Lister and Traynor 2009).

With the continued dynamism of nightlife, the routines of some cities or certain areas have been affected, resulting in alcohol-related violence. The responsible entities respond to this situation through regulation, which results in the use of the private security sector to prevent violence and minimize the concerns of authorities and local residents (Wadds, 2011).

This increase in violence in the night economy has been demonstrated in academic work investigating the relationship between alcohol consumption, disorder and violent behaviour (Levine, Lowe, Best, and Heim 2012). Several studies at both individual and community level also highlight a consistent association between alcohol consumption and criminal behaviour (Snowden, 2019). There has not only been a change in the consumption of alcoholic beverages in the nightlife, but habits have also been changed and there is increasing consumption, sometimes excessive, at home or elsewhere before going to nightclubs. Alcohol consumption and going out at night is not a new practice, as people have always drunk alcohol at home before going out (Farrimond, Boyd and Fleischer, 2018), however, it has become increasingly common, especially among young people, to consume excessive alcohol at home or in the street bought in convenience stores before entering night-time entertainment venues.

With the expectation that people consume more when better safety conditions are met, most cities have implemented special policies to promote this safety, along with the stimulation of more nocturnal-oriented areas (van Liempt 2015). Lisbon is one such case that in 2018 created the "Night + Safety" program with the objective of reinforcing safety in the areas of Cais do Sodré, Bairro Alto and Zona Ribeirinha.

2.2.2. Actions Taken to Promote Safety in Nightlife

After the two landmark events related to bouncers-doormen on the night of Lisbon, the government rushed to present measures to keep calm. In a press conference the Public Security Police stated that

it was not dangerous to leave Lisbon, that it was still a safe city and that it would not be isolated and punctual cases that would determine that the city would suffer the consequences of the possible insecurity that the images showed. However, as in the case of inappropriate conduct by elements of the public security forces, where media coverage can drastically shake citizens' confidence in the police (Weitzer 2002), the same thing happened in private security, with the massive release of images recorded via a mobile phone.

With the "Night + Safe: Lisbon" programme, legislative and operational initiatives have been put forward. The legislative measures would include changes to the current legal systems for both night-time entertainment and private security activities. Among the changes in the scope of night-time entertainment spaces, it was recommended: a) the existence of a Security Officer and an Internal Security Plan with security and self-protection measures; b) the possibility of the Security Forces applying the closure or reduction of hours in case of danger of public order disturbance and tranquility, subject to ratification by the authority within a maximum of 24 hours; c) the existence of private security in establishments with more than 100 seats; d) the use of video surveillance systems at all accesses and with the possibility of connection by the Security Forces. In the private security activity, the initiatives also indicated more responsibility requirements: a) verification of suitability for the exercise of private security activity; b) specific training for the bouncer-doorman specialty in night entertainment establishments, which is autonomous from other specialties; c) possibility of suspension or cancellation of the enabling title, private security guard and/or company, for the exercise of private security activity.

The operational measures, focusing on the delimitation of night-time entertainment zones and the consumption of alcohol by minors, would include awareness raising, prevention and enforcement: a) licensing compliance awareness campaign; b) licensing accompanied by the Civil Protection area; involvement of entrepreneurs to improve safety conditions in establishments; d) support from various business associations; e) joint supervision of establishments identified by the Police; f) noise control; g) creation of a computer platform for administrative registration, misdemeanour and criminal occurrences; h) preparation of contingency plans to attend to emergency situations; i) definition of an area for pre-positioning of rescue and emergency means, whenever justified; j) joint patrolling between PSP and PM; k) video-surveillance in public space; l) checking the conditions of public space; m) prohibition of trailer sales of alcoholic beverages in and around the delimited areas; n) prevention campaign, of alcohol consumption by minors, joint government areas of the Internal Administration and Health with the Lisbon City Council on the harmful effects on health and greater vulnerability and exposure to crime; and o) inspection of the sale of alcohol to minors in and around the areas of night entertainment (zero tolerance).

2.3. Prior Research Findings

The state is responsible for providing services that benefit the general public holistically, without any discrimination (Galli, 2020b), however, in terms of security the state is not able to provide a global response to the needs of each citizen, creating a space for private security. In various situations of daily life, private security companies already play a role and tasks similar to public security, putting private security guards in contact with the general public (Nalla and Gurinskaya 2017). However, despite the proliferation of the continuous and daily presence of private security guards in contact with the general public, little is known about the public's perception of private security companies and the personnel at their service (Nalla and Heraux 2003) and about their trust and citizens' satisfaction with private security (Moreira, Cardoso, and Nalla 2015).

The work of Nalla and Heraux (2003) had the overall objective of analysing the perception of college students in relation to private security guards. Although most respondents did not understand that private security guards were well educated, well trained or that they demonstrated professionalism in the performance of their duties, about half of these respondents trusted them. It was also interesting to note that the majority of respondents considered private security guards to be effectively useful.

In another work in roughly the same period Mesko, Nalla, Sotlar and Johnson (2006) surveyed 509 college students attending a large university in Slovenia during 2004. The results suggest that respondents do not have a positive perception of private security guards as they do not consider them to be professional, helpful or well trained.

van Steden and Nalla (2010) developed a study with the participation of 428 respondents from the city of Amsterdam, among others, with the aim of studying the professionalism and integrity of private security guards as well as the respondents' satisfaction with these professionals. The results show that respondents do not consider private security guards to be well-trained, well-educated and honest. However, regarding the perception about private security guards being helpful, the results follow the Nalla and Heraux (2003) study, as more than half of the respondents consider these professionals to be effectively useful. Another interesting finding of this work is that less than half of the respondents do not feel safe with private security guards around, nor do they trust them to protect lives and property.

The results of a study also conducted in Portugal on Citizen confidence in private security guards in Portugal with a sample of 163 respondents from the city of Porto, Moreira, Cardoso, and Nalla (2015) showed that less than half of respondents felt they could trust private security guards. 43% of respondents believed that private security guards are well educated and only 38% think they are able to handle complex situations. Less than 20% felt that these professionals are well trained.

In work carried out with 364 college students attending various universities in St. Petersburg, Russia, Nalla, Gurinskaya and Rafailova (2017) it turned out that only about one third of respondents think that private security guards are well prepared to deal with complex situations, that they are professionals and that they are well trained. With regard to satisfaction with private security guards, only about one third of respondents also consider that they do a good job and provide the services that clients want, however, in general terms respondents have a favourable opinion about the ability of private security guards to solve problems and provide satisfactory services to citizens.

Kim, Button and Lee (2018) conducted a study comparing public perceptions of private security guards in shopping centres in South Korea and the UK supported by 200 interviews with customers visiting the malls, 200 hours of observation and 39 interviews with private security guards and other stakeholders. On the quality of service provided by private security guards, over 80% of respondents in South Korea rated them as 'good' or 'very good', while in the UK just over half of respondents rated them as 'good'.

Nalla, and László (2018) studied perceptions of private security guards in Hungary by interviewing 800 citizens in Budapest. On the professionalism of private security guards the results indicated that less than one third of respondents (29.2%) consider them to be well trained, professional (26.8%) and capable of dealing with complex problems (27.8%). In sum, the results suggest that the public does not seem to have a favourable opinion about the professionalism of private security guards. As far as their satisfaction with these professionals is concerned, half of the respondents (50.1%). find them useful. 41.9% think they are courteous. 40.9% who provide the assistance citizens need and 38.5% who are attentive to people's needs. In general terms, respondents show higher satisfaction rates than their perception of the professionalism of private security guards.

There are no previous studies focusing on the public perception of the professionalism of bouncers-doormen or the satisfaction with their services. Hence the urgency and usefulness of this research.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

For this research, a questionnaire with ten items was adapted, already applied by Mesko, Nalla and Sotlar (2004) to collect young people's perception of private security in Slovenia. In addition to the ten items from the original questionnaire, four new items adapted to the Portuguese reality were introduced. These four items are specific and based on the Portuguese legal framework defined for

the private security guards specialty. It was decided to use the 7-point Likert scale, where 1= "I totally disagree" and 7= "I totally agree".

3.2. Measures

In the study of customer satisfaction of the nightclubs with regard to security guards, we adapted the questionnaire applied by Mesko, Nalla and Sotlar (2004), as it is already targeted at private security guards. In this work, the authors considered the dimension as professionalism, however, in similar investigations these items are distributed between professionalism and satisfaction with private security guards, as happened in the investigation of van Steden and Nalla (2010). In this study, satisfaction was the outcome variable. It was fundamental for this study to measure the public perception about the professionalism, mainly about the fulfillment of their tasks, which are legally defined.

We conducted initially a descriptive analysis of the variables: constructs and socio-demographic (mean and standard deviation), the evaluation of the consistency of the constructs for each dimension (Chronbach's alpha), the adjustment of the constructs to define the final dimensions (RMSEA, CFI and TLI), created indicators of the dimensions (analysis in main components) and evaluated the impact of socio-demographic variables/factors on the dimensions under analysis (analysis of variance).

4. RESULTS

The questionnaire was available online from May 2019 to April 2020. A total of 479 responses were obtained (Table 1).

Table 1. Sample characterization

Variable		Description	n	%
Age:		24 years or less	209	43.63%
		25-44 years	208	43,43%
		45 years or more	62	12.94%
Gender:		Male	219	45.72%
		Female	260	54.28%
Have you ever been the target, or witnessed friends of yours being the target, of threats, insults or physical assaults by other clients in night-time entertainment spaces?		Yes	289	60.33%
		No	190	39.67%
Have you ever been the target, or witnessed friends of yours being the target, of unnecessary violence by bouncers-doormen in nightly entertainment spaces?		Yes	167	34.86%
		No	312	65.14%
Have you ever had, or witnessed friends of yours have, situations of protection or assistance from bouncers-doormen in the nightly entertainment spaces?		Yes	239	49.90%
		No	240	50.10%
How often have you been to nightclubs with private security in the last 12 months?		Less 4 times	214	44.68%
		Between 5 and 12 times	144	30.06%
		More than 12 times	121	25.26%

The analysis of the characterization of the 479 respondents shows that the majority are female (54.28%), are distributed in main age groups of "24 years or less" (43.63%) and "25-44 years" (43.43%). The majority (60.33%) has already been the target, or witnessed friends being the target, of

situations of threats, insults or physical aggression by other customers in the night-time entertainment spaces, but has not been the target, or witnessed friends being the target, of situations of unnecessary violence by bouncers-doormen in the night-time entertainment spaces (65.14%). When it comes to situations of protection or assistance by bouncers-doormen in night-time amusement spaces either to themselves or to their friends, half say yes (49.90%) and half say no (50.10%). A significant part of the respondents visited night-time amusement spaces less than 5 times in the last 12 months with private security presence (44.68%), 30.06% visited these spaces 5 to 12 times and only 25.26% visited them more than 12 times.

Table 2. Descriptive statistical analysis

	StD/D/SwD		N/I		SwA/A/StA			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	Mean	St. Dev
Bouncers-doormen are generally honest	136	28.39	154	32.15	189	39.46	4.18	1.44
Bouncers-doormen in general are helpful	64	13.36	93	19.42	322	67.22	5.23	1.53
Bouncers-doormen are well trained	168	35.07	142	29.65	169	35.28	3.97	1.55
Bouncers-doormen are professionals	148	30.90	130	27.14	201	41.96	4.16	1.61
Bouncers-doormen have good ability to foresee and anticipate incidents	152	31.73	113	23.59	214	44.68	4.24	1.61
Bouncers-doormen create empathy with customers	218	45.51	89	18.58	172	35.91	3.73	1.85
Bouncers-doormen are well educated	210	43.84	107	22.34	162	33.82	3.79	1.69
Bouncers-doormen have a lot of discretion	173	36.12	143	29.85	163	34.03	3.95	1.60
Bouncers-doormen are unaware of customers' needs	167	34,86	130	27,14	182	38,00	4,08	1.64
Bouncers-doormen abuse their power	119	24.84	95	19,83	265	55.32	4.68	1.77
Bouncers-doormen properly watch and protect people and goods in night-time entertainment spaces	132	27.56	118	24.63	229	47.81	4.30	1.56
Bouncers-doormen correctly control the entry, presence and exit of people from discos and bars, to detect and prevent the introduction of objects and substances prohibited or likely to enable acts of violence	170	35.49	115	24.01	194	40.50	4.05	1.70
Bouncers-doormen effectively prevent crime in night-time entertainment venues	177	36.95	114	23.80	188	39.25	3.99	1.64
Bouncers-doormen guide and provide the necessary support to nightclubs and bars customers in emergency situations, namely those involving the evacuation of the establishment.	115	24.01	122	25.47	242	50.52	4.52	1.60

We started the analysis of the constructs with the descriptive statistical analysis presenting the mean and standard deviation (Table 2).

Since a 7-point Likert scale was used to demonstrate the distribution of the answers, highlighting the extremes of the scale, we decided to divide it into three parameters, the first (StD/D/SwD) being

the answers "1 - Strongly disagree", "2 - Disagree" and "2 - Somewhat disagree", a central parameter (N/I) with the answers "4 - neutral/intermediate" and a last one (SwA/A/StA) with the answers "5 - Somewhat agree", "6 - Agree" and "7 - Strongly agree", as shown in the following table.

With the highest average figure (5.23) it is clear that night-time entertainment customers consider bouncers-doormen in general to be helpful. 67.22% of respondents consider them to be indeed useful.

More than half of the respondents (55.32%) also consider that they abuse their power. The third and final item with a level of agreement in more than half of the respondents (50.52%) is related to action in emergency situations, where they considered that bouncers-doormen guide and provide the necessary support to customers. The percentage of respondents who agree that bouncers-doormen have good ability to foresee and anticipate incidents (44.68%)

Both scales showed excellent reliability, measured through Cronbach alpha. The scale of satisfaction with security guards, presented a Chronbach's alpha of 0.90 and the scale of the perception of professionalism of security guards, an alpha of 0.907. The constructs are adequate, given the results (CFI=0.924; TLI=0.909; and RMSEA=0.0983).

Table 3. Item loadings and construct reliability

Satisfaction		Loadings
Bouncers-doormen are generally honest		0.778
Bouncers-doormen in general are helpful		0.748
Bouncers-doormen are well trained		0.748
Bouncers-doormen are professionals		0.893
Bouncers-doormen have good ability to foresee and anticipate incidentes		0.854
Bouncers-doormen create empathy with customers		0.779
Bouncers-doormen are well educated		0.852
Bouncers-doormen have a lot of discretion		0.753
Cronbach's Alpha		**0.919**
Acting/behaviour		
Bouncers-doormen are unaware of customers' needs		0.817
Bouncers-doormen abuse their power		0.817
Cronbach's Alpha		**0.502**
Professionalism		
Bouncers-doormen properly watch and protect people and goods in night-time entertainment spaces		0.868
Bouncers-doormen correctly control the entry, presence and exit of people from discos and bars, to detect and prevent the introduction of objects and substances prohibited or likely to enable acts of violence		0.881
Bouncers-doormen effectively prevent crime in night-time entertainment venues		0.920
Bouncers-doormen guide and provide the necessary support to nightclubs and bars customers in emergency situations, namely those involving the evacuation of the establishment.		0.868
Cronbach's Alpha		**0.907**

An analysis in main components (PC) was performed with the objective of linearly combining the information of each of the items in proxy variables of the dimension they represent. It was not necessary to rotate the factors, keeping the extraction of independent factors, given that the values of the 1st PC of each group represent respectively 78.3%, 64.6% and 66.8% of the total variation observed in each of the three dimensions: we considered the 1st PC of each group as a proxy for the perception of professionalism in general, contextual and specific terms.

Although the initial warranty of the model is already good and adjusted to the research, because the items i) Bouncers-doormen are unaware of customers' needs; and j) Bouncers-doormen abuse their power present a small correlation with the satisfaction dimension, we tried to isolate a third dimension. Thus, a model with three factors was created, where the perception of professionalism was the same (4 items) and the initial satisfaction construction with security guards (10 items) was divided into two factors. The first of these factors has eight items (a) to (h) and the second factor has only two items (i) and (j). The dimension with eight items maintained the denomination of satisfaction, while the new dimension of two items was identified as the perception of performance/behavior. The three new dimensions are: 1- perception of professionalism; 2- satisfaction; and 3- perception of performance/behavior. The indicators improved (CFI=0.932; TLI=0.916; and RMSEA=0.0944).

There have been changes in reliability in the dimensions resulting from the original dimension satisfaction. The Chronbach's alpha of the perception of professionalism was 0.907, while the satisfaction dimension, with only eight items, changed from 0.90 to 0.919 and the new dimension was 0.502, which was excluded. Thus, two dimensions remained.

As the purpose of testing the effect of the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample on the perception of professionalism and satisfaction with security guards, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed using the proxies resulting from the analysis in main components (Table 4).

Within the perception of professionalism, gender, worked as private security, having family/friends in private security, Exposure (or friends) to situations of unnecessary violence by bouncers-doormen and Exposure (or friends) to situations of protection or assistance by bouncers-doormen are significant.

The satisfaction with the service provided by security guards worked as private security, have family/friends in private security, exposure to situations of unnecessary violence by bouncers-doormen and exposure to situations of protection or assistance by bouncers-doormen are significant.

Regarding the correlation, the results show that the perception of the professionalism of the bouncers-doormen has a strong effect, direct and significant, on the satisfaction with the security guards (r= .823, p= <.001).

5. DISCUSSION

The results of the research are very relevant to know the customers' perception of the nightlife spaces about the professionalism of the security guards as well as their satisfaction as customers.

Considering the twelve final items of the model, we can affirm that the clients of the night-time entertainment spaces consider that the private security guards are professionals (average 4.22) and that they are satisfied with their performance (average 4.16). It is curious that the highest average is in professionalism, relegating satisfaction to second place. Thus, clients understand that bouncers-doormen are professionals and that they perform their legally assigned duties well, however, their satisfaction as clients is slightly lower. Given the involvement of the study, it is perceptible, as the work of these security guards is sometimes carried out against the will of the clients, especially those who have inappropriate behaviour and conduct, and are therefore invited not to remain in these places.

Within their professionalism, the highest average (4.52) is achieved in tasks related to emergency situations, followed by tasks of surveillance and protection of persons and property (4.30). The usefulness of bouncers-doormen (5.23), which is the highest average of all statements, stands out positively, leaving no room for doubt those customers of night-time entertainment establishments find security guards useful.

Table 4. Anova test results

	F3		F1	
	Professionalism		Satisfaction	
	Mean	N	Mean	N
Age				
Less than 25 years	14.1	209	24.6	209
25-44 years	14.8	208	26.9	208
More than 45 years	15.9	62	28.5	62
Gender	*			
Male	15.4	219	26.9	219
Female	14.5	260	26.5	260
Worked as private security	***		***	
Yes	18.0	156	31.1	156
No	13.4	323	24.5	323
Family/friends in private security	**		**	
Yes	15.5	243	27.9	243
No	14.3	236	25.4	236
Exposure (or friends) to threats, insults or physical assaults by other customers				
Yes	14.6	289	26.1	289
No	15.3	190	27.3	190
Exposure (or friends) to unnecessary violence by bouncers-doormen	***		***	
Yes	13.5	167	23.9	167
No	16.4	312	29.4	312
Exposure (or friends) to situations of protection or assistance by bouncers-doormen	***		***	
Yes	16.5	239	28.6	239
No	13.4	240	24.7	240
Frequency of night-time entertainment spaces, with private security, in the last 12 months				
Less than 4 times	14.6	214	26.2	214
Between 5 and 12 times	15.1	144	26.7	144
More than 12 times	15.2	121	27.2	121
* $p < .1$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p \pounds .001$				

These results are not consistent with the results of the van Steden and Nalla (2010) study where they concluded that private security guards are not well trained, are not educated or honest and are not able to handle complex situations. Our results are also in contradiction with the results of the Nalla, Gurinskaya and Rafailova (2017) study where young people's perception of private security guards was not very positive with regard to their professionalism and were not satisfied with their ability to solve

problems in the community. Our findings also diverge from the research of Mesko, Nalla, Sotlar and Johnson (2006) who concluded that students do not have a positive perception of the professionalism of security guards and do not believe that they are honest, helpful or well trained. These results are in line with previous research (Moreira, Cardoso and Nalla 2015). When comparing these studies with ours that all the other research was carried out in a general context of the security guard function while our research focused on a very specific area of security guards, the bouncers-doormen, which work exclusively in the night environment, in bars and discos. We were also interested in studying whether or not there were variations in the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

For the dimension of professionalism, it was confirmed as significant the differences of averages in relation to gender, to have already worked as private security, to have family and friends working in this activity as well as the direct exposure, or of friends, to situations of unnecessary violence or of protection and assistance on the part of the security guards. Of those surveyed, those of the male gender present a higher level in the perception of the professionalism of the bouncers-doormen. Those who have worked as private security guards have a considerably higher level of professionalism among their colleagues. Whether or not they have family or friends working in private security, respondents who have family and friends working in the activity have a higher average in the perception of professionalism of bouncers-doormen than those who do not. As would be expected, respondents who have not been exposed, or friends of their own, to situations of unnecessary violence by bouncers-doormen as well as those, or friends of their own, who have already been in situations of protection or assistance from bouncers-doormen present a higher average in the perception of the professionalism of these guards.

In customer satisfaction with the performance of bouncers-doormen, there were significant differences in the averages of having worked as a private security guard, having family and friends working in this activity as well as direct exposure, or of friends, to situations of unnecessary violence or protection and assistance by bouncers-doormen. Curiously, those who do not have family or friends working in private security have a higher average of satisfaction with the performance of the bouncers-doormen. As far as the satisfaction as customers of the nightlife spaces are concerned, those who have or have had contact with the profession have a higher average than the others. As it happened in the perception of professionalism, also the respondents who were not exposed, or friends of yours, to situations of unnecessary violence on the part of bouncers-doormen as well as those, or friends of yours, who have had in situations of protection or assistance by bouncers-doormen, present a higher average level of satisfaction with the performance of bouncers-doormen.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1. Theoretical Conclusions

Although there is previous research on the perception of citizens regarding private security guards, this research contributes by studying the perception of professionalism and satisfaction with bouncers-doormen performance, in night entertainment places. This research indicates that users of night-time entertainment venues consider bouncers-doormen to exercise their activity professionally and are satisfied as customers with their performance.

Despite the large and recent media exposure of this specialty of private security guards, which has brought many "ghosts" from the past to the present, the conclusion is that their presence is useful and beneficial in protecting those who enjoy themselves at night.

Of course, there are aspects to be improved in the field of bouncers-doormen, which result from the responses of the nightlife customers, namely empathy for the customers and education, which require joint work between private security companies, the security guards themselves, the managers of the nightlife spaces and the authorities with responsibilities in the area. However, bouncers-doormen will be part of the solution, and not part of the problem, so that the nightlife spaces are safer and those who have fun in them can do so in an atmosphere of tranquility and trust.

This research is of great interest for the private security landscape in general and for the specific situation of the security of night-time entertainment spaces.

The managers of these spaces should know the perception of their clients about the professionalism degree of the bouncers-doormen who night after night keep the places safe for business and fun. Managers also know that their clients are satisfied with the security of the spaces and with those who ensure it, that is, the bouncers-doormen.

After situations that have tarnished the sector and led to the closure of some of Lisbon's most emblematic spaces, managers and authorities learn the opinion of those who best know the reality of night-time safety, i.e. regular customers.

The overall analysis of private security in night-time entertainment venues does not allow conclusions to be drawn by geographical region.

6.2. Contribution

This research is original by studying only one of the various specialties of the segurity guards: bouncers-doormen. There are not many published works on professionalism and satisfaction with the security guards, and most study the profession in general. Few are exceptions, which have studied specific functions on these professionals as is the case of those who work in shopping malls.

This is the first research on the professionalism of bouncers-doormen and satisfaction with their work. It is also one of the few jobs where the frequency of respondents with these professionals was taken into consideration, as well as whether they had been the target, or had witnessed friends of theirs being the target, of situations of unnecessary violence on the part of Security Guards in the spaces of night entertainment or even, if they had, or had witnessed friends of theirs having, situations of protection or assistance on the part of Security Guards in the spaces of night entertainment.

6.3. Limitations and Future Research

The overall analysis of private security in night-time entertainment venues does not allow conclusions to be drawn by geographical region. In the present study, geographical issues have not been worked out and are clearly a limitation in the overall analysis.

In future research it will be useful for respondents to be invited to respond on the safety of night-time amusement spaces in different areas, e.g. the most significant and frequented of parents, near large metropolitan areas. It would be interesting to compare the results with their work in other regions and other countries.

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