

# **Employee Surveillance & Occupational Stress: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

By

Ioanna Charalampidou

A Dissertation Submitted to ALBA Graduate Business School in Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Strategic Human Resources  
Management

Supervised by Prof. Alexandros Psychogios

ALBA Graduate Business School

June 2021

**Table of Contents**

Abstract.....	8
Chapter 1 Introduction.....	10
1.1 Study Background .....	10
1.2 Problem Statement.....	13
1.3 Purpose of the Study.....	14
1.4 Research Questions .....	14
1.5 Conceptual Framework .....	14
1.6 Assumptions .....	15
1.7 Significance of the Study.....	15
1.8 Overview of the Dissertation.....	16
Chapter 2 Literature.....	17
2.1 Introduction .....	17
2.2 The Concept of Employee Surveillance .....	17
2.2.1 Surveillance Technologies .....	18
2.2.2 Surveillance Objectives .....	19
2.2.3 Surveillance Risks .....	19
2.2.4 Panopticon Effects.....	20
2.3 Relevant Theories for Employee Surveillance .....	21
2.3.1 Communication Privacy Management (CPM) .....	21
2.3.2 Privacy Calculus Theory .....	24
2.4 The Concept of Occupational Stress .....	26
2.5 Relevant Theories for Occupational Stress .....	26
2.6 Summary and Conclusions .....	30
Chapter 3 Research Methodology .....	32
3.1 Introduction .....	32
3.2 Research Design and Rationale .....	32
3.3 Rationale for Qualitative Approach.....	32
3.4 Rationale for Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis .....	35
3.5 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis .....	36
3.6 Selection Factors .....	38
3.7 Sample size.....	39
3.8 Participant Profiles, Backgrounds, and Experience .....	39
3.9 Participants' Role and Ethical Considerations.....	41

3.10 The Role of Phenomenological Researcher.....	42
3.11 Data Collection Process.....	42
3.12 Interview Scheduling.....	43
3.13 Interview Questions.....	44
3.14 Data Analysis Process.....	46
3.15 Trustworthiness of the Data.....	49
Chapter 4 Results.....	51
4.1 Introduction .....	51
4.2 Coding and Developing Emergent Themes.....	51
4.3 Super-ordinate Theme 1: Big Brother Metaphor.....	55
4.4 Super-ordinate Theme 2: The psychological consequences of surveillance .....	58
4.5 Super-ordinate Theme 3: Privacy and Boundaries .....	60
4.6 Research Question Analysis .....	61
4.7 Chapter Summary .....	62
Chapter 5 Discussion .....	64
5.1 Super-ordinate Theme 1: Key points.....	64
5.2 Super-ordinate Theme 2: Key points.....	65
5.3 Super-ordinate Theme 3: Key points.....	66
Chapter 6 Conclusion .....	68
6.1 Limitations of the Study .....	68
6.2 Implications for Future Research .....	69
6.3 Implications for Future Practice .....	69
6.4 Reflection .....	69
6.5 Concluding Thoughts .....	70
Bibliography .....	72
Appendix 1: Consent for participation in an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis interview .....	81
Appendix 2: Interview schedule for exploring the experience of employees regarding employee surveillance and the consequent experience of occupational stress.....	83

Table 1: Participants' profile, background, and experience (job position, sector, industry, age, years of experience, main responsibilities) ..... 40

Table 2: Extract from interview with Maria ..... 52

Table 3: Developing sub-ordinate themes from emergent themes ..... 54

Table 4: Subsumption leading from sub-ordinate themes to super-ordinate themes..... 55