8.1. Shift work is a common feature of modern industries. Industries are required to operate under shift system for technological, economic and social reasons. Inspite of its economic importance, shift work system appears to have some disadvantages too. It may create a lot of problems for shift workers, especially when night work is involved. Shift workers show various physical and psychological complaints, including degradation of physical strength, lack of sleep, inferiority complex and irritability and anxiety, due to the abnormal life pattern of night work and day rest (Uehata et al., 1982; Kogi et al., 1976). Since the shift work system is inevitable in this modern world, an important topic for study seems to be the impact of shift work on the psycho-social lives of the workers, which may consequently affect their health, efficiency and productivity.

8.2. Need for the study

A review of past literature does not reveal much empirical evidence concerning psycho-social effects of shift work. Mott et al., (1965) investigated the factors of self-esteem, modesty, and conflict pressure and found no relationship to the type of shift schedule. So the present study will claim a good deal of importance throwing light on the psycho-social aspects of shift workers.
8.3. Aims of the study

The objectives of the present study were to assess and compare:

1. Work-related fatigue of the permanent day and night shift workers,
2. Subjective rating of the permanent day and night shift workers about the perceived effort required for the work concerned,
3. Health and well-being of the permanent day and night shift workers,
4. Mental health problems reported by the permanent day and night shift workers,
5. The job-satisfaction of the two groups of shift workers, and
6. Effects of shift work on the family life, social life and leisure activities of the two groups of the subjects.

8.4. Research Design

The research method employed to collect data for the investigation was that of field study. The study was carried out in a cotton mill (the Chittaranjan Cotton Mills Ltd.) in Narayanganj, Bangladesh. In the present study, the subjects consisted of 150 male shift workers working on 3-permanent (fixed or non-rotating) shift system, such as morning shift (06.00-10.00h and 2.00-6.00h), afternoon shift (10.00-2.00h and 6.00-10.00h), night shift (10.00-06.00h). Out of the 150 permanent day and night shift workers, 75 were working on the permanent day shift (06.00-11.00h) and 2.00-5.00h) and 75 on the permanent night shift (10.00-06.00h).
8.5. Measuring Instruments

In the present study, the following measuring instruments were used:

i) Symptoms of Fatigue Scale (Yoshiteke, 1971),
ii) Scale for Ratings of Perceived Effort (Borg, 1962),
iii) Subjective Health Questionnaire (Dirken, 1966),
iv) The Brayfield-Rothe Scale (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951),
v) General Mental Health Questionnaire (Goldberg, 1972),

All the measuring instruments mentioned above were used after adaptation with the Bengalee Sample.

8.6. Procedure

Information concerning working in shifts, experience in work, age, and educational qualification of the workers was collected from the personnel records of the factory.

The Questionnaires were administered to the subjects personally by the investigator himself. The interview was taken in a cordial and informal atmosphere.

It may be mentioned here that in analysing the results of this study a comparison has been made between the permanent day and night shift workers.

To examine whether there were any significant differences between the permanent day and night shift workers in respect of fatigue, perceived effort
required for the work concerned, health complaints, job satisfaction, mental health, workers' attitudes towards some specific aspects of shift work such as health complaints, sleep difficulties and perception of family life and social life in shift work, t-ratios were computed.

8.7. Sample

The sample of the study comprised 150 male shift workers employed in a cotton mill. Out of 150 shift workers, 75 were working on permanent day shift system and 75 on the permanent night shift. All the subjects were selected from among the workers of the cotton mill randomly.

8.8. Major findings of the study

The major findings of the study may be furnished as follows:

1) The permanent night shift workers made a significantly greater number of complaints of fatigue than the permanent day shift workers.

2) The degree of perceived effort was significantly higher for the permanent night shift workers than for the day shift workers.

3) The night shift workers showed a significantly higher number of health complaints than that of the day shift workers.

4) The permanent night shift workers possessed a significantly poor mental health than that of the permanent day shift workers.

5) Most of the permanent night shift workers thought that their work schedule disturb family life, curtail leisure activities, create difficulties
for meeting friends, disturb sleep, affect health, and disturb regularity of meal time. But the permanent day shift workers did not think so. The results also showed that the most of the permanent day shift workers do not consider that their work schedule affects their social life.

6) The results of the present study showed that a significantly greater number of the permanent day shift workers are satisfied with their job in comparison to the permanent night shift workers.

7) The results also revealed that shift workers consider elimination of night shift as the best remedial measure.

8.9. Conclusion

It is evident from the results of the present study that the permanent night shift has significant adverse effects on the psycho-social lives and the health and well-being of the workers.

It can be said that the permanent night shift workers studied here reported comparatively more symptoms of felt-fatigue, work-stress in terms of perceived effort, health complaints, interruptions in performing normal social and cultural obligations of life, and achieved dissatisfaction regarding the nature of duty hours of their placement in the job.

The results also showed that shift workers think that night shift creates most of the problems. They considered elimination of night shift as the best remedial measure.

Hence it may be concluded from the present study that the problems of shift work could be overcome by closing night shift and rotating the workers between two shifts during day time. Thus, their biological rhythm will not be impaired and there will be a little detrimental effect on their psycho-social lives too.