



A study on Frequency of Stress among Female Police Constables Reference to Tamilnadu Police Department, India

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Abstract

The review of literature has highlighted a variety of workplace problems, such as racial and gender bias and lack of influence over work activities, as influences on police stress. Additional explanations for police stress include community conditions, for example, high crime rates and size of the community within the police organization, and lack of family and coworker support for work-related activities. In a large-sample, descriptive study, this research examined the workplace problems that were hypothesized to predict stress. It also determined whether community conditions and lack of social support explained additional variance in police constables' stress levels. Lack of influence over work activities and bias against one's racial, gender. Interventions to redesign jobs to afford greater influence and to reduce within department bias are approaches that could reduce police officers' stress.

Key words: Community, organization, racial, stress, workplace problems.

Introduction

Occupational stress among police is often viewed as an unlucky, but expected part of police work. Police are like a real heroes, but most of people are unaware the amount of stress that police face every day. Police work involves protection of life, safeguarding property through vital patrol techniques, enforcement of laws and ordinances in the place for which the Police station is responsible. Police who are out in the street, every day during their duty are struggle police. They are the first's line of protection between the criminals and the society. During their duty, unexpectedly they may encounter situations involving major crisis without any warning. There are several factors like 24 hours availability, administration problem were involved and make police as a most stressful job. This study basically deals with Tamil Nadu police department and the Tamil Nadu has a Police population ratio of 1: 632. Police Constable is the lowest police grade in India. This study explores the major causes of stress and amount of stress faced by police constables.

Police occupational stress is a widespread problem because of its numerous negative effects on individuals and on police organizations. Officers who experience high levels of occupational stress report a high incidence of physical ailments and psychological problems that affect their work performance. Specifically, they commonly have poor health¹⁻³, are frequently absent from work⁴, experience burnout⁵⁻⁹, are dissatisfied with their jobs¹⁰ and because of weak organizational commitment, they may not fully invest themselves in their work or they may retire prematurely¹¹⁻¹³. When individuals are overwhelmed by occupational stress they suffer from increased chronic stress, depression, heart disease, stomach disorders, alcohol and drug

use and abuse, divorce, and even suicide attempts^{8, 14-17}. It is therefore critical to understand the sources of police occupational stress (i.e., the stressors) and to implement strategies for reducing stressors or, if they cannot be reduced, for assisting officers in coping effectively with them.

Workplace problems are distinct from other stressors, for example, difficulties in balancing a job and family responsibilities or a person's personality traits and related methods of coping with workplace problems. Workplace problems are troublesome features of the work organization. They include negative interactions with other police officers in the department, feelings about status and opportunities in the department, bias and harassment, and overestimates and underestimates of physical abilities¹⁸. For police officers, there is evidence that workplace problems have considerable influence on stress. Wexler and Logan¹⁹ found in their qualitative research that when women police identified occupational stressors, they highlighted problems with interactions with coworkers. White and Marino²⁰ found from their longitudinal, quantitative research on men and women that problems in the organization and with the workplace climate were the only types of stressors that seemed to be causally related to stress. Although some subsequent pieces of research have not found an exclusive influence of workplace problems on stress, workplace problems have repeatedly been shown to be important influences^{3,5, 7, 18, 21,22}.

Four or five stressed-out women police commit suicide every year. Stress-related ailments have killed more serving policemen in the past three years. Several inspectors and constables have died of heart attacks while on duty. Constables are feeling that

they work under great pressure and their job is demanding and uncertain, also, public expectations from the police are high. During festivals timings, constables often work for more than 36 hours at a stretch. This may take a heavy charge on their health. Stress can cause hypertension, joint pains, high blood pressure, diabetes as well as paralytic strokes and heart attacks. They also experience lack of concentration, resulting in their making errors while passing orders or taking important decisions. Besides the routine work, constables often face stressful situations because of harassment from superiors. The overall goal of the study is to explore the major personal and cognitive factors with occupational stress, and identifying the relationship between amounts of stress, causes and the relations between the socio demographic factors.

Objective of the study: The following are the objectives of this study: i. The study the socio-demographic factors of the respondents; ii. Identify the most stressful job activities of women police constables; iii. To study the relationship between demographic factors and level of stress among the women police constables;

Research Methodology

The research design chosen is descriptive as the study reveals the existing facts. Descriptive research is the study which describes the characteristics of a particular individual, or a group. This study is about selected variable of stress. This study is based on the police constables in Tuticorin district. The research concentrated on eight sub divisions comprising 52 police stations and the researcher collected 274 samples from women police constables. The researcher used convenience sampling for the study. The researcher prepared structured questionnaires for data collection for this study. The questionnaires included questions on demographic profile and causes of stress. Primary data were collected through the questionnaire directly from the respondents and the secondary data were collected from government records, books, journals and the Internet. The researcher used descriptive analysis, chi-square for data analysis.

Findings: Table 1 shows that most of the police constables are belong to Grade II (144) and many of them falls between 20-29 years (155) age group. Most of the female constables are having under graduation level (190) education qualification. 218 respondents are following Hinduism as their religion and 148 constables are belongs to other castes. 200 constables are from rural area and most of them are unmarried (150), 96 respondents are having 6-10 years of experience. 146 respondents are having two dependants in their family and 153 constables are getting Rs.5000-20000 plus grade pay Rs.1900 as their monthly salary.

Table 2 shows that 114 female police constables are facing very high amount of stress. 90 female constables facing high amount of stress and only 13 constables are facing very low stress in

their occupation. 25 respondents are facing low stress in their occupation.

Table-1
Demographic profile

Options	Frequency	Percent
Designation		
Grade I	97	35.4
Grade II	144	52.6
Grade III (HC)	33	12
Age		
20-29 years	155	56.6
30-39 years	91	33.2
40-49 years	26	9.5
50-59 years	2	0.7
Educational qualification		
School level	40	14.6
UG	190	69.3
PG	38	13.9
Professional	6	2.2
Religion		
Hinduism	218	79.6
Islam	32	11.7
Christianity	24	8.8
Community		
Other castes	148	54.0
Backward castes	54	19.7
Most backward castes	15	5.5
Scheduled castes	57	20.8
Place of the residence		
Rural	200	73
Urban	74	27
Marital status		
Married	99	36.1
Unmarried	150	54.7
Divorced	12	4.4
Separated	13	4.7
Years of service		
Less than 5 years	81	29.6
6 - 10 years	96	35
11 - 15 years	69	25.2
16-20 years	26	9.5
Greater than 20 years	2	0.7
Number of dependents		
One	39	14.2
Two	146	53.3
Three	80	29.2
Four	7	2.6
Five	1	0.4
More than five	1	0.4
Total monthly income		
Rs.5200-20200 plus grade pay Rs.2400	106	38.7
Rs.5000-20000 plus grade pay Rs.1900	153	55.8
Rs.5200-20200 plus grade pay Rs.2800	15	5.5
Total	274	100

Table-2
Overall level of stress

Level of stress	Frequency	Percent
Very low stress	13	5
Low stress	25	9
Neither stress nor no stress	32	12
High Stress	90	33
very high stress	114	42
Total	274	100

Table 3 shows Cronbach's alpha is 0.942, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for scale with this specific sample.

Table-3
Reliability Test

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of scaling variables
0.942	44

This table 4 shows that mean statistics of the frequent stressful activities faced by the female police constables, Nature of police is to safe guard the public and maintains the law and order. This makes "insufficient personal time" and this is the first ranked stressful activity with the mean value of 5.47. "Seeing criminals going free" is the second ranked stressful activity with the mean value of 5.46. Lack of support from administration leads "Lack of recognition for good work" and this is the third ranked stressful activity with the mean value of 5.28. "Insufficient personnel to handle an assignment and periods of inactivity" are the last ranked stressful event with the mean value of 4.17 and 4.14.

Chi square between top stressful activities and demographic profile of the female constables: H_0 : There is no significant association between top stressful activities and demographic profile of the female constables, H_1 : There is a significant association between top stressful activities and demographic profile of the female constables.

From this table 5, significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to go to court, having to deal with the media and working overtime". Hence there is an association between above mention stress activities and designation of the female constables.

From the above table 6 significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to deal with the media, meeting deadlines, lack of opportunity for advancement and competition for advancement". Hence the above mentioned stressful events are having association with age of the female constables.

From the table 7 significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to deal with the media, meeting deadlines and working overtime". Hence the above mentioned stressful events are having association with experience of the female police constables.

Table-4
Mean ranking of frequent stress activities faced by female constables

Stressful activities	Mean	SD
Insufficient personal time (e.g., coffee breaks, lunch)	5.47	2.52
Seeing criminals go free	5.46	2.60
Lack of recognition for good work	5.28	2.42
Having to go to court	5.25	2.42
Having to deal with the media	5.24	2.55
Meeting deadlines	5.19	2.48
Working overtime	5.19	2.15
Dealing with crisis situations	5.16	2.18
Lack of opportunity for advancement	5.14	2.31
Competition for advancement	5.13	2.35
Inadequate salary	5.12	2.52
Delivering a death message or bad news to someone	5.12	2.55
Fellow workers not doing their job	5.10	2.20
Poor or inadequate supervision	5.09	2.42
Covering work for another employee	5.08	2.21
Experiencing negative attitudes toward the organization	5.08	2.16
Performing tasks not in job description	5.06	2.20
Inadequate or poor quality equipment	5.00	2.14
Frequent interruptions	4.99	2.14
Shift work	4.98	2.38
Assignment of increased responsibility	4.96	2.14
Conflicts with other departments	4.93	2.24
Poorly motivated co-workers	4.89	2.11
Difficulty getting along with supervisor	4.89	2.39
A forced arrest or being physically attacked	4.89	2.50
Noisy work area	4.88	2.31
Attending to incidences of domestic violence	4.82	2.44
Personal insult from customer/consumer/colleague	4.80	2.43
Too much supervision Stressful Job-Related Events	4.79	2.39
Reorganization and transformation within the organization	4.75	2.31
Excessive paperwork	4.75	2.35
Assignment of new or unfamiliar duties	4.73	2.35
Making critical on-the-spot decisions	4.72	2.17
Racial conflict	4.70	2.78
Killing someone in the line of duty	4.68	2.74
Inadequate support by supervisor	4.66	2.04
Frequent changes from boring to demanding activities	4.65	2.05
Having to handle a large crowd/mass demonstration	4.64	2.60
Staff shortages	4.57	2.62
Lack of participation in policy-making decisions	4.56	2.35
A fellow officer killed in the line of duty	4.38	2.66
Assignment of disagreeable duties	4.19	2.27
Insufficient personnel to handle an assignment	4.17	2.21
Periods of inactivity	4.14	2.40

Table-5
Chi square between top stressful activities and designation of the constables

Top stressful activities	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)	A/NA	Decision
Insufficient personal time	22.869a	18	0.20	Accepted	No association
Seeing criminals go free	12.605a	18	0.81	Accepted	No association
Lack of recognition for good work	23.729a	18	0.16	Accepted	No association
Having to go to court	29.801a	18	0.04**	Rejected	Association
Having to deal with the media	35.088a	18	0.01**	Rejected	Association
Meeting deadlines	20.182a	18	0.32	Accepted	No association
Working overtime	30.600a	18	0.03**	Rejected	Association
Dealing with crisis situations	19.503a	18	0.36	Accepted	No association
Lack of opportunity for advancement	19.013a	18	0.39	Accepted	No association
Competition for advancement	24.111a	18	0.15	Accepted	No association

**** H₀ Rejected**

Table-6
Chi square between top stressful activities and age of the constables

Top stressful activities	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)	A/NA	Decision
Insufficient personal time	39.621 ^a	27	0.06	Accepted	No association
Seeing criminals go free	32.730 ^a	27	0.21	Accepted	No association
Lack of recognition for good work	38.522 ^a	27	0.07	Accepted	No association
Having to go to court	37.587 ^a	27	0.08	Accepted	No association
Having to deal with the media	40.845 ^a	27	0.04**	Rejected	Association
Meeting deadlines	51.934 ^a	27	0.00**	Rejected	Association
Working overtime	35.167 ^a	27	0.13	Accepted	No association
Dealing with crisis situations	30.100 ^a	27	0.31	Accepted	No association
Lack of opportunity for advancement	43.407 ^a	27	0.02**	Rejected	Association
Competition for advancement	45.162 ^a	27	0.02**	Rejected	Association

**** H₀ Rejected**

Table-7
Chi square between top stressful activities and experience of the constables

Top stressful activities	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)	A/NA	Decision
Insufficient personal time	43.666 ^a	36	0.18	Accepted	No association
Seeing criminals go free	36.906 ^a	36	0.43	Accepted	No association
Lack of recognition for good work	36.706 ^a	36	0.44	Accepted	No association
Having to go to court	49.543 ^a	36	0.07	Accepted	No association
Having to deal with the media	59.949 ^a	36	0.01**	Rejected	Association
Meeting deadlines	61.760 ^a	36	0.00**	Rejected	Association
Working overtime	52.035 ^a	36	0.04**	Rejected	Association
Dealing with crisis situations	38.246 ^a	36	0.37	Accepted	No association
Lack of opportunity for advancement	42.337 ^a	36	0.22	Accepted	No association
Competition for advancement	31.452 ^a	36	0.68	Accepted	No association

**** H₀ Rejected**

Table-8
Chi square between top stressful activities and monthly income of the constables

Top stressful activities	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)	A/NA	Decision
Insufficient personal time	25.199 ^a	18	0.12	Accepted	No association
Seeing criminals go free	28.032 ^a	18	0.06	Accepted	No association
Lack of recognition for good work	24.743 ^a	18	0.13	Accepted	No association
Having to go to court	17.336 ^a	18	0.50	Accepted	No association
Having to deal with the media	45.341 ^a	18	0.00**	Rejected	Association
Meeting deadlines	32.997 ^a	18	0.02**	Rejected	Association
Working overtime	52.158 ^a	18	0.00**	Rejected	Association
Dealing with crisis situations	20.111 ^a	18	0.33	Accepted	No association
Lack of opportunity for advancement	20.646 ^a	18	0.30	Accepted	No association
Competition for advancement	17.953 ^a	18	0.46	Accepted	No association

**** H₀ Rejected**

From the table 8 significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to deal with the media, meeting deadlines and working overtime". Hence the above mentioned stressful events are having association with income of the female police constables.

Findings: i. It was shows that most of the police constables are belong to Grade II (144) and many of them falls between 20-29 years (155) age group. Most of the female constables are having under graduation level (190) education qualification. 218 respondents are following Hinduism as their religion and 148 constables are belongs to other castes. 200 constables are from rural area and most of them are unmarried (150), 96 respondents are having 6-10 years of experience. 146 respondents are having two dependants in their family and 153 constables are getting Rs.5000-20000 plus grade pay Rs.1900 as their monthly salary, ii. It was found that 114 female police constables are facing very high amount of stress. 90 female constables facing high amount of stress and only 13 constables are facing very low stress in their occupation. 25 respondents are facing low stress in their occupation, iii. It was identify that mean statistics of the frequent stressful activities faced by the female police constables, Nature of police is to safe guard the public and maintains the law and order. This makes "insufficient personal time" and this is the first ranked stressful activity with the mean value of 5.47. "Seeing criminals going free" is the second ranked stressful activity with the mean value of 5.46. Lack of support from administration leads "Lack of recognition for good work" and this is the third ranked stressful activity with the mean value of 5.28. "Insufficient personnel to handle an assignment and periods of inactivity" are the last ranked stressful event with the mean value of 4.17 and 4.14, iv. It was found that significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to go to court, having to deal with the media and working overtime". Hence there is an association between above mention stress activities and designation of the female constables, v. It was shows that significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to deal with the media, meeting deadlines, lack of opportunity for advancement and competition for advancement". Hence the above mentioned stressful events are having association with age of the female constables, vi. It was found that significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to deal with the media, meeting deadlines and working overtime". Hence the above mentioned stressful events are having association with experience of the female police constables, vii. It was found that significance of Chi square value is less than 0.05 for "having to deal with the media, meeting deadlines and working overtime". Hence the above mentioned stressful events are having association with income of the female police constables.

Results and Discussion

The first was various factor extracted from Stressful Job Related Events do not vary with the demographic factors of the respondents. Findings from this study shows that women police

constable's stressful job related events like Stress due to insufficient personal time, Seeing criminals going free, Lack of recognition for good work, Having to go to court, Having to deal with the media, Meeting deadlines, Working overtime, Dealing with crisis situations, Lack of opportunity for advancement, Competition for advancement Inadequate salary, Delivering a death message or bad news to someone do vary with demographic factors like age, gender, religion, service of the years, marital status, income and the place of residence. This present study also suggested that perception about the work and practice must be changed by providing good work climate and developed departmental policy that will reduce the stress level. And police department must offer counseling for the police constables and giving chance to them for future scope. The researcher suggested that during the recruitment personality dimensions also examined. Decreasing working hours, role overload and work load, flexi working time will lead to maintain their personal time. Responsibility of the police constables must considered based on their capacity, because Tamil Nadu has a Police population ratio of 1: 632, Police departments, with their tense organizational structures, offer both opportunities and challenges for stress prevention programs. Although it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programs, we believe that these programs may be effective if started early during police training and delivered regularly throughout a police's career to keep the rate of stress among police as low as possible.

Conclusion

The study explained Stress due to insufficient personal time, Seeing criminals going free, Lack of recognition for good work, Having to go to court, Having to deal with the media, Meeting deadlines, Working overtime, Dealing with crisis situations, Lack of opportunity for advancement, Competition for advancement Inadequate salary, Delivering a death message or bad news are the primary causes of stress among police constables. Further, it empirically investigated that age, gender, religion, service of the years, marital status, income and the place of residence in the same field has significant association with stress level among police constables. The study suggests to regularly organizing the training programs, counseling and medical checkups for stress management of women police constables.

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