

Job Stress among Police Personnel

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Abstract —Stress is an inevitable part of police personnel. The purpose of this research is to identify causes of stress and also empirically investigate the socio-demographic factors affecting stress level among police personnel. Multistage random sampling method was employed to select a sample 65 police personnel in Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh). Findings revealed that political pressure, lack of time for family, negative public image and low salary were the primary causes of stress among police personnel. It also emerged that stress is significantly more pronounced among those police personnel who are younger, more educated, posted in rural areas and have less work experience. The findings supplement existing body of knowledge and contribute to the understanding of causes of stress and role of socio-demographic factors in affecting stress level among police personnel.

Keywords: Police, Causes of stress, Uttar Pradesh etc.

I. INTRODUCTION

Policing is one of the most stressful occupations. The work of police is to protect life and property. It undertakes investigation of crimes. Its role involves many challenges such as encounter with dreaded elements while handling crimes. These roles expose police officers to different work situations which require different physical and mental ability (Anshel, 2000; Rollinson, 2005; Morash et al., 2006) to deal with situations firmly and effectively. A number of studies were carried out in different parts of the world for understanding nature of stress among Police Personnel. The reasons for stress are negative working environment plenty; long working hours, lack of time for family, irregular eating habits, need to take tough decisions, sleepless nights, poor living conditions, torture by seniors, disturbed personal life and the dwindling public confidence in the police force (Water and Ussery, 2007; Malach- Pines and Kienan, 2007, McCarthy et. al, 2007). In addition to above, stress may occur due to organizational factors like management style, poor communication, lack of support, inadequate resources and work overload (Kop et. al, 1999). Stress among policemen would manifest in the form of fatigue, depression, inability to concentrate, irritability and impulsive behaviour. These danger signals are quite common among the policemen. Policemen are often viewed as rude and highhanded. However, outsiders may not appreciate the extreme conditions under which they lead their lives. Stress also has a negative effect on the health of the policemen. It makes them more susceptible to physical ailments. Both

physical and mental illness renders the employee unfit for work. It impacts job satisfaction and reduces job performance.

In India, several studies have been conducted by researchers on 'stress' among police personnel in the country.

- (1) Dangwal et al. (1982)- He studied on a sample including three states and subordinate police personnel only. They suggested a more representative sample including more states and also inclusion of all the level of police hierarchy.
- (2) Bhaskar (1982)- He also suggested to explore the relationship between behavioural, psychological and health effects and experience of job stress among police.
- (3) Pillai (1987)- His study suggested to explore the need for periodical diagnosis of stress and related symptoms to reinforce improved functioning of system and enhance the health and job satisfaction among police personnel.
- (4) Ramchandaran (1989)- He suggested to need of a more intensive study which would depict insights into behavioral patterns at other level of hierarchy.
- (5) Tripathi et al. (1993)- They gave a scope for a larger and more representative sample in future studies in police. His study was based on four districts to UP state.
- (6) Suresh(1992)- He also found the need of research for extending the findings of his study to police officers in divergent regional and culture context.
- (7) Mathur (1999)-He suggested that longitudinal studies would be very good to identify the impact of police work on individual. He also suggested that the family members of police personnel can also include in future studies.

II. Objectives

The broad objectives of the present study are to identify causes of job-related stress and to empirically investigate the socio-demographic factors affecting stress level among police personnel.

III. Data and Methodology

Data were collected from 65 police personnel including officers at all levels in district Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh). Multistage random sampling method was used to select

police personnel at all level. A structured questionnaire containing relevant questions related to stress and socio-demographic factors was administered to selected police personnel. All the collected data was digitized into SPSS 11.5 and simple frequency table generated and percentage were calculated accordingly. Logistical analysis was also performed using the SPSS 11.5 to empirically investigate the socio-demographic factors affecting stress level among police personnel.

The demographic profile of overall sample is shown in Table 1. The age composition of the sample shows normal distribution with average age of 37 years. Educational profile of the sample shows that above 48 percent

respondents are graduate and above; 42 percent are having education intermediate and high school levels. Above 94 percent respondents reported to be married. Most of the survey participants were found to be posted in urban areas. The sample comprises a good composition of different work profile and experienced police personnel. About half of the respondents positioned as constables and some 6 percentage at ASC/ASP/SP levels. About 34 percentage respondents experienced more than 20 years while some 27 percentage have less experience of below 10 years. Over 55 percentage police respondents reported to be staying with family.

TABLE 1: DEMOGRAPHICS PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

	N	%		N	%
Age (years)			Work profile/ Designation		
<30	16	24.6	Aarsi	10	16.4
30-40	23	35.4	Driver/cleaner	6	9.8
41-50	20	30.8	ASC/ASP/SP	4	6.6
50-60	6	9.2	DSP	1	1.6
Total	65	100.0	Constable	31	50.8
Education			HCMT	4	6.6
JHS and below	6	9.4	Inspector /SI/SHO	5	8.2
High School	11	17.2	Total	61	100.0
Intermediate	16	25.0	Service Tenure	N	%
Graduate/P.G.	31	48.4	<10 years	13	27.7
Total	64	100.0	10-20 years	18	38.3
Marital status			20-30 years	14	29.8
Unmarried	3	5.6	>30 years	2	4.3
Married	51	94.4	Living with family		
Total	54	100.0	Yes	30	55.6
Place of posting			No	24	44.4
Urban	42	77.8	Total	54	100.0
Rural	12	22.2			
Total	54	100.0			

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Causes Of Stress

The main cause of stress as perceived by the respondents are Political pressure (71.2%), lack of time for family (68.2%), non cooperation from public and negative public image (62.1%)

and low salary (57.6%). In addition, a large number of them also referred other causes like lack of govt. support (48.5%), work overload (48.1%), frequent transfer (48.5%), excessive job (36.5%), lack of organizational/departmental support (36.4%), torture by senior officers (30.3%) and so on (Table 2).

TABLE 2: CAUSES OF STRESS AS PERCEIVED BY POLICE PERSONNEL (%)

Causes of stress	%	Ranking
Working condition	19.7	13
Non cooperation from public/ Negative public image	62.1	3
Political pressure	71.2	1

Lack of time for family	68.2	2
Lack of govt. Support	48.5	5
Torture by senior officers	30.3	9
Irregular & long working hours	25.8	11
Excessive job/time pressure	36.5	7
Personal problem	21.2	12
Low salary	57.6	4
Lack of organizational/departmental support	36.4	8
Work overload	48.1	6
Make decisions without proper information	19.7	13
Frequent transfer	48.5	5
Excessive supervision & pressure from higher authorities	27.3	10

Source: Primary survey

B. Socio-Demographic Factors Causing Stress Among Police Personnel

Table 3 illustrates the results of the binary logistic regression using the stress as dependent variable and the independent variables of socio-demographic factors. The model is a reasonably good fit as indicated by the

summary statistics. The chi-square statistic for the model is 28.05, which is significant at 1 percent level ($p < 0.01$) and Nagelkerke R² (R²N = 0.619) indicates an adequately goodness of fit. The estimated logit model correctly predicted 82.2 percent of respondent's views.

TABLE 3: LOGISTIC REGRESSION-DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS HAVING STRESS ON POLICE PERSONNEL

	B	S.E.	Wald	Sig.	Exp(B)
Age (1 if <30 years, 0 otherwise)	3.299	1.420	5.399	0.020**	27.081
Education (1 if non-graduate, 0-Graduate/PG)	-2.846	1.060	7.209	0.007*	0.058
Marital Status (1 if married, 0 otherwise)	0.529	1.506	0.123	0.726	1.697
Post (1 if lower position, 0 higher position)	1.443	1.240	1.355	0.244	4.233
Service Tenure (1 if <10 years, 0 otherwise)	2.945	1.426	4.266	0.039**	19.003
Place of posting (1 if rural, 0 urban)	4.219	1.814	5.410	0.020**	67.977
Living with family (1 if not living with family, 0 otherwise)	-0.807	1.166	0.479	0.489	0.446
Constant	-3.681	2.276	2.615	0.106	0.025
-2 Log likelihood	34.134				
Nagelkerke R Square	0.619				
Cox & Snell R Square	0.464				
Chi-square	28.049*				
Percentage Correct prediction (%)	82.22				

*significant at 1% level **significant at 5% level

The results indicate that stress is significantly more prominent in those police personnel who are younger (<30 years), more educated (preferably graduate and P.G.), posted in rural areas and less experienced (< 10 years working experience). Living with family, post and marital status of police personnel have no significant impact on stress level of police personnel.

V. Conclusion

The study identified political pressure, lack of time for family; negative public image and low salary are the primary causes of stress among police personnel. Further, it empirically investigated that age, education level and work experience in the same field has significant association with stress level among police personnel. The study suggests to regularly organizing the training

programmes, counselling and yoga classes for stress

management of police personnel.

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